ESSAYS:

BY

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BACON'S ESSAYS.

I.—OF TRUTH.

WHAT is truth? said jesting Pilate;* and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that delight in giddiness; and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits, which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor which men take in finding out of truth; nor again, that when it is found, it imposeth upon men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favor; but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later schools† of the Grecians examineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lies; where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets; nor for advantage, as with the merchant, but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell: this same

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* He refers to the following passage in the Gospel of St. John, xviii. 38: "Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all."

† He probably refers to the "New Academy," a sect of Greek philosophers, one of whose moot questions was, "What is truth?" Upon which they came to the unsatisfactory conclusion that mankind has no criterion by which to form a judgment.

truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masks, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world, half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day, but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth best in varied light. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the fathers, in great severity, called poesy "vinum dæmonum," * because it filleth the imagination and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in, and settleth in it, that doth the hurt, such as we spake of before. But howsoever, these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth, that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making, or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense:† the last was the light of reason:‡ and his Sabbath work ever since is the illumination of his Spirit. First, he breathed light upon the face of the matter, or chaos;

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* "The wine of evil spirits."

† Genesis i. 3: "And God said, Let there be light, and there was light."

‡ At the moment when "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—Genesis ii. 7.

then he breathed light into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen. The poet * that beautified the sect,† that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: "It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea: a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof below: but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth" (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene), "and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below:"‡ so always that

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* Lucretius, the Roman poet and Epicurean philosopher, is alluded to.

† He refers to the sect which followed the doctrines of Epicurus. The life of Epicurus himself was pure and abstemious in the extreme. One of his leading tenets was that the aim of all speculation should be to enable men to judge with certainty what course is to be chosen in order to secure health of body and tranquility of mind. The adoption, however, of the term "pleasure," as denoting this object, has at all periods subjected the Epicurean system to great reproach; which, in fact, is due rather to the conduct of many who, for their own purposes, have taken shelter under the system in name only, than to the tenets themselves, which did not inculcate libertinism. Epicurus admitted the existence of the Gods, but he deprived them of the characteristics of Divinity either as creators or preservers of the world.

‡ Lord Bacon has either translated this passage of Lucretius from memory, or has purposely paraphrased it. The following is the literal translation of the original:

'Tis a pleasant thing, from the shore to behold the dangers of another upon the mighty ocean, when the winds are lashing the main: not because it is a grateful pleasure for any one to be in misery, but because it is a pleasant thing to see those misfortunes from which you yourself are free: 'tis also a pleasant thing to behold the mighty contests of warfare, arrayed upon

this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business; it will be acknowledged even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature, and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious; and therefore Montaigne* saith prettily, when he inquired the reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge, saith he, "If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth, is as much as to say that he is brave towards God

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the plains, without a share in the danger: but nothing is there more delightful than to occupy the elevated temples of the wise, well fortified by tranquil learning, whence you may be able to look down upon others, and see them straying in every direction, and wandering in search of the path of life."

* Michael de Montaigne, the celebrated French essayist. His Essays embrace a variety of topics, which are treated in a sprightly and entertaining manner, and are replete with remarks indicative of strong native good sense. He died in 1592. The following quotation is from the second book of the Essays, c. 18: —"Lying is a disgraceful vice, and one that *Plutarch*, an ancient writer, paints in most disgraceful colors, when he says that it is 'affording testimony that one *first* despises God, and then fears men:' it is not possible more happily to describe its horrible, disgusting, and abandoned nature: for can we imagine anything more vile than to be cowards with regard to men, and brave with regard to God?"

and a coward towards men. For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man;" surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men: it being foretold, that, when "Christ cometh," he shall not "find faith upon the earth." *

II.—OF DEATH.†

MEN fear death as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other. Certainly, the contemplation of death, as the wages of sin, and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition. You shall read in some of the friars' books of mortification, that a man should think with himself, what the pain is, if he have but his finger's end pressed or tortured; and thereby imagine what the pains of death are, when the whole body is corrupted and dissolved; when many times death passeth with less pain than the torture of a limb; for the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense. And by him that spake only as a philosopher, and natural man, it was well said, "Pompa mortis magis terret quam mors ipsa." ‡ Groans and

* St. Luke xviii. 8: "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?"

† "A portion of this Essay is borrowed from the writings of Seneca. See his Letters to Lucilius, B. iv. Ep. 24 and 82.

‡ "The array of the death-bed has more terrors than death itself." This quotation is from Seneca.

convulsions, and a discolored face, and friends weeping, and blacks * and obsequies, and the like, show death terrible. It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but it mates and masters the fear of death; and therefore death is no such terrible enemy when a man hath so many attendants about him that can win the combat of him. Revenge triumphs over death; love slights it; honor aspireth to it; grief flieth to it; fear pre-occupateth it; nay, we read, after Otho the emperor had slain himself, pity (which is the tenderest of affections) provoked many to die out of mere compassion to their sovereign, and as the truest sort of followers. Nay, Seneca adds, niceness and satiety: "Cogita quamdiu eadem feceris; mori velle, non tantum fortis, aut miser, sed etiam fastidiosus potest." † A man would die, though he were neither valiant nor miserable, only upon a weariness to do the same thing so oft over and over. It is no less worthy to observe, how little alteration in good spirits the approaches of death make: for they appear to be the same men till the last instant. Augustus Cæsar died in a compliment; "Livia, conjugii nostri memor, vive et vale." ‡ Tiberius in dissimulation, as Tacitus saith of him, "Jam Tiberium vires et corpus, non dissimulatio, deserebant:" § Vespasian in a jest, sitting upon the

* He probably alludes to the custom of hanging the room in black where the body of the deceased lay, a practice much more usual in Bacon's time than at the present day.

† "Reflect how often you do the same things; a man may wish to die, not only because either he is brave or wretched, but even because he is surfeited with life."

‡ "Livia, mindful of our union, live on, and fare thee well."

§ "His bodily strength and vitality were now forsaking Tiberius, but not his duplicity."

stool,* "Ut puto Deus fio:"† Galba with a sentence, "Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani,"‡ holding forth his neck; Septimus Severus in dispatch, "Adeste, si quid mihi restat agendum,"§ and the like. Certainly the Stoics‖ bestowed too much cost upon death, and by their great preparations made it appear more fearful. Better, saith he, "qui finem vitæ extremum inter munera ponit naturæ."¶ It is as natural to die a sto be born; and to a little infant, perhaps, the one is as painful as the other. He that dies in an earnest pursuit, is like one that is wounded in hot blood; who, for the time, scarce feels the hurt; and therefore a mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good, doth avert the dolors of death; but, above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is "Nunc dimittis,"** when a man hath obtained worthy

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* This was said as a reproof to his flatterers, and in spirit is not unlike the rebuke administered by Canute to his retinue.

† "I am become a Divinity, I suppose."

‡ "If it be for the advantage of the Roman people, strike."

§ "If aught remains to be done by me, dispatch."

‖ These were the followers of Zeno, a philosopher of Citium, in Cyprus, who founded the Stoic school, or "School of the Portico," at Athens. The basis of his doctrines was the duty of making virtue the object of all our researches. According to him, the pleasures of the mind were preferable to those of the body, and his disciples were taught to view with indifference health or sickness, riches or poverty, pain or pleasure.

¶ "Who reckons the close of his life among the boons of nature." Lord Bacon here quotes from memory; the passage is in the tenth Satire of Juvenal, and runs thus:

> "Fortem posce animum, mortis terrore carentem,
> Qui spatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat
> Naturæ"——

"Pray for strong resolve, void of the fear of death, that reckons the closing period of life among the boons of nature."

** He alludes to the song of Simeon, to whom the Holy Ghost

ends and expectations. Death hath this also, that it openeth the gate to good fame, and extinguisheth envy; "Extinctus amabitur idem." *

III.—OF UNITY IN RELIGION.

Religion being the chief band of human society, it is a happy thing when itself is well contained within the true band of unity. The quarrels and divisions about religion were evils unknown to the heathen. The reason was, because the religion of the heathen consisted rather in rites and ceremonies, than in any constant belief; for you may imagine what kind of faith theirs was, when the chief doctors and fathers of their church were the poets. But the true God hath this attribute, that he is a jealous God; and therefore his worship and religion will endure no mixture nor partner. We shall therefore speak a few words concerning the unity of the church; what are the fruits thereof; what the bounds; and what the means.

The fruits of unity (next unto the well-pleasing of God, which is all in all) are two; the one towards those that are without the church, the other towards those that are within. For the former, it is certain, that heresies and schisms are of all others the greatest scandals; yea, more than corruption of manners: for as in the natural body a wound or solution of continuity is

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had revealed "that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." When he beheld the infant Jesus in the Temple, he took the child in his arms and burst forth into a song of thanksgiving, commencing, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—St. Luke ii. 29.

* "When dead, the same person shall be beloved."

worse than a corrupt humor, so in the spiritual: so that nothing doth so much keep men out of the church, and drive men out of the church, as breach of unity; and therefore whensoever it cometh to that pass that one saith, "Ecce in Deserto,"* another saith, "Ecce in penetralibus;"† that is, when some men seek Christ in the conventicles of heretics, and others in an outward face of a church, that voice had need continually to sound in men's ears, "nolite exire,"—"go not out." The doctor of the Gentiles (the propriety of whose vocation drew him to have a special care of those without) saith, "If a heathen‡ come in, and hear you speak with several tongues, will he not say that you are mad?" and, certainly, it is little better: when atheists and profane persons do hear of so many discordant and contrary opinions in religion, it doth avert them from the church, and maketh them "to sit down in the chair of the scorners."§ It is but a light thing to be vouched in so serious a matter, but yet it expresseth well the deformity. There is a master of scoffing that in his catalogue of books of a feigned library sets down this title of a book, "The Morris-Dance‖ of Heretics:" for,

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* "Behold, he is in the Desert."—St. Matthew xxiv. 26.

† "Behold, he is in the secret chambers."—St. Matthew xxiv. 26.

‡ He alludes to I. Corinthians xiv. 23: "If, therefore, the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?"

§ Psalm i. 1 "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

‖ This dance, which was originally called the Morisco dance, is supposed to have been derived from the Moors of Spain; the dancers in earlier times blackening their faces to resemble

indeed, every sect of them hath a diverse posture, or cringe, by themselves, which cannot but move derision in wordlings and depraved politicians, who are apt to contemn holy things.

As for the fruit towards those that are within, it is peace, which containeth infinite blessings; it establisheth faith; it kindleth charity; the outward peace of the church distilleth into peace of conscience, and it turneth the labors of writing and reading of controversies into treatises of mortification and devotion.

Concerning the bounds of unity, the true placing of them importeth exceedingly. There appear to be two extremes: for to certain zealots all speech of pacification is odious. "Is it peace, Jehu?"—"What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me."* Peace is not the matter, but following and party. Contrariwise, certain Laodiceans† and lukewarm persons think they may accommodate points of religion by middle ways, and taking part of both, and witty reconcilements, as if they would make an arbitrament between God and man. Both these extremes are to be avoided; which will be

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Moors. It was probably a corruption of the ancient Pyrrhic dance, which was performed by men in armor, and which is still existing in Greece, in Byron's "Song of the Greek Captive :"—

"You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet."

Attitude and gesture formed one of the characteristics of the dance. It is still practised in some parts of England.

* II. Kings, ix. 18.

† He alludes to the words in Revelations, c. iii. v. 14, "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I will spue thee out of my mouth." Laodicea was a city of Asia Minor. St. Paul established the church there which is here referred to.

done if the league of Christians, penned by our Saviour himself, were in the two cross clauses thereof soundly and plainly expounded: "He that is not with us is against us;" * and again, "He that is not against us is with us;" that is, if the points fundamental and of substance in religion, were truly discerned and distinguished from points not merely of faith, but of opinion, order, or good intention. This is a thing may seem to many a matter trival, and done already; but if it were done less partially, it would be embraced more generally.

Of this I may give only this advice, according to my small model. Men ought to take heed of rending God's church by two kinds of controversies; the one is, when the matter of the point controverted is too small and light, not worth the heat and strife about it, kindled only by contradiction; for, as it is noted by one of the fathers, "Christ's coat indeed had no seam, but the church's vesture was of divers colors;" whereupon he saith, "In veste varietas sit, scissura non sit," † they be two things, unity and uniformity; the other is, when the matter of the point controverted is great, but it is driven to an over-great subtilty and obscurity, so that it becometh a thing rather ingenious than substantial. A man that is of judgment and understanding shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself, that those which so differ mean one thing, and yet they themselves would never agree; and if it come so to pass in that distance of judgment, which is between man and man, shall we not think that God above, that knows the heart, doth not discern that frail

* St. Matthew, xii. 30.

† "In the garment there may be many colors, but let there be no rending of it."

men, in some of their contradictions, intend the same thing; and accepteth of both? The nature of such controversies is excellently expressed by St. Paul, in the warning and precept that he giveth concerning the same; "Devita profanas vocum novitates, et oppositiones falsi nominis scientiæ." * Men create oppositions which are not, and put them into new terms, so fixed as, whereas the meaning ought to govern the term, the term in effect governeth the meaning. There be also two false peaces, or unities; the one, when the peace is grounded but upon an implicit ignorance: for all colors will agree in the dark: the other, when it is pieced up upon a direct admission of contraries in fundamental points: for truth and falsehood, in such things, are like the iron and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image;† they may cleave, but they will not incorporate.

Concerning the means of procuring unity, men must beware that, in the procuring or muniting of religious unity, they do not dissolve and deface the laws of charity and of human society. There be two swords amongst Christians, the spiritual and temporal; and both have their due office and place in the maintenance of religion: but we may not take up the third sword, which is Mahomet's sword,‡ or like unto it: that is, to propagate religion by wars, or by sanguinary persecutions to force consciences; except it be in cases of overt scandal, blasphemy, or intermixture of practice against the state; much less to nourish seditions; to authorize

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* "Avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."—1. Tim. vi. 20.

† He alludes to the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, significant of the limited duration of his kingdom. See Daniel ii. 33, 41.

‡ Mahomet proselytized by giving to the nations which he conquered the option of the Koran or the sword.

conspiracies and rebellions; to put the sword into the people's hands, and the like, tending to the subversion of all government, which is the ordinance of God; for this is but to dash the first table against the second; and so to consider men as Christians, as we forget that they are men. Lucretius the poet, when he beheld the act of Agamemnon, that could endure the sacrificing of his own daughter, exclaimed:

"Tantum religio potuit sua dere malorum." *

What would he have said, if he had known of the massacre in France,† or the powder treason of England?‡ He would have been seven times more epicure and atheist than he was; for as the temporal sword is to be drawn with great circumspection in cases of religion, so it is a thing monstrous to put it into the hands of the common people; let that be left unto the Anabaptists, and other furies. It was great blasphemy, when the devil said, "I will ascend and be like the Highest;" but it is greater blasphemy to personate God, and bring him in saying, "I will descend, and be like the prince of darkness;" and what is it better, to make the cause of religion to descend to the cruel and execrable actions of murdering princes, butchery of people and subversion of states and governments? Surely this

* "To deeds so dreadful could religion prompt." The poet refers to the sacrifice by Agamemnon, the Grecian leader, of his daughter Iphigenia, with the view of appeasing the wrath of Diana.

† He alludes to the massacre of the Huguenots, or Protestants, in France, which took place on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24, 1572, by the order of Charles IX. and his mother, Catherine de Medici. On this occasion about 60,000 persons perished, including the Admiral de Coligny, one of the most virtuous men that France possessed, and the mainstay of the Protestant cause.

‡ More generally known as "the Gunpowder Plot."

is to bring down the Holy Ghost, instead of the likeness of a dove, in the shape of a vulture or raven; and to set out of the bark of a Christian church a flag of a bark of pirates and assassins; therefore it is most necessary that the church by doctrine and decree, princes by their sword, and all learnings, both Christian and moral, as by their Mercury rod,* do damn, and send to hell forever those facts and opinions tending to the support of the same; as hath been already in good part done. Surely in councils concerning religion, that counsel of the apostle would be prefixed, "Ira hominis non implet justitiam Dei:"† and it was a notable observation of a wise father, and no less ingenuously confessed, that those which held and persuaded pressure of consciences were commonly interested therein themselves for their own ends.

IV.—OF REVENGE.

REVENGE is a kind of wild justice, which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out: for as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law, but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior; for it is a prince's part to pardon: and Solomon, I am sure, saith, "It is the glory of a man to pass by an offense."‡ That which is past is gone and irrevoca-

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* Allusion is made to the "caduceus," with which Mercury, the messenger of the gods, summoned the souls of the departed to the infernal regions.

† "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."—James i. 20.

‡ These words as here quoted, are not to be found in the writings of Solomon, though doubtless the sentiment is.

ble, and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come; therefore they do but trifle with themselves that labor in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake, but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honor, or the like; therefore why should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me? And if any man should do wrong merely out of ill-nature, why yet it is but like the thorn or briar, which prick and scratch, because they can do no other. The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy; but then, let a man take heed the revenge be such as there is no law to punish, else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and it is two for one. Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh: this is the more generous; for the delight seemeth to be not so much in doing the hurt as in making the party repent: but base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark. Cosmus, Duke of Florence,* had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable. "You shall read," saith he, "that we are commanded to forgive our enemies; but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends." But yet the spirit of Job was in a better tune: "Shall we,' saith he, "take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also?" † and so of friends in a proportion. This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and

* He alludes to Cosmo de Medici, or Cosmo I., chief of the Republic of Florence, the encourager of literature and the fine arts.

† Job ii. 10— "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

do well. Public revenges * are for the most part fortunate; as that for the death of Cæsar;† for the death of Pertinax; for the death of Henry the Third of France;‡ and many more. But in private revenges it is not so; nay, rather vindictive persons live the life of witches: who, as they are mischievous, so end they unfortunate.

V.—OF ADVERSITY.

It was a high speech of Seneca (after the manner of the Stoics), that, "the good things which belong to prosperity are to be wished, but the good things that belong to adversity are to be admired." ("Bona rerum secundarum optabilia, adversarum mirabilia.") Certainly, if miracles be the command over nature, they appear most in adversity. It is yet a higher speech of his than the other (much too high for a heathen), "It is true greatness to have in one the frailty of a man, and the security of a god." ("Vere magnum habere fragilitatem hominis, securitatem Dei.") This would have done better in poesy, where transcendencies are more allowed; and the poets, indeed, have been busy with it; for it is in effect the thing which is figured in

* By "public revenges," he means punishment awarded by the state with the sanction of the laws.

† He alludes to the retribution dealt by Augustus and Antony to the murderers of Julius Cæsar. It is related by ancient historians as a singular fact, that not one of them died a natural death.

‡ Henry III. of France was assassinated in 1599, by Jacques Clement, a Jacobin monk, in the frenzy of fanaticism. Although Clement justly suffered punishment, the end of this bloodthirsty and bigoted tyrant may be justly deemed a retribution dealt by the hand of an offended providence; so truly does the poet say:

——"neque enim lex æquior ulla
Quam necis artifices arte perire sua."

that strange fiction of the ancient poets,* which seemeth not to be without mystery; nay and to have some approach to the state of a Christian, "that Hercules, when he went to unbind Promethus (by whom human nature is represented), sailed the length of the great ocean in an earthen pot or pitcher," lively describing Christian resolution, that saileth in the frail bark of the flesh through the waves of the world. But to speak in a mean, the virtue of prosperity is temperance, the virtue of adversity is fortitude, which in morals is the more heroical virtue. Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction, and the clearer revelation of God's favor. Yet even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp, you shall hear as many hearse-like airs† as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not

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* Stesichorus, Apollodorus, and others. Lord Bacon makes a similar reference to this myth in his treatise "On the Wisdom of the Ancients." "It is added with great elegance, to console and strengthen the minds of men, that this mighty hero (Hercules) sailed in a cup, or 'urceus,' in order that they may not too much fear and allege the narrowness of their nature and its frailty; as if it were not capable of such fortitude and constancy; of which very thing Seneca argued well, when he said, 'It is a great thing to have at the same time the frailty of a man, and the security of a God.'"

† Funereal airs. It must be remembered that many of the Psalms of David were written by him when persecuted by Saul, as also in the tribulation caused by the wicked conduct of his son Absalom. Some of them, too, though called "The Psalms of David," were really composed by the Jews in their captivity at Babylon; as, for instance, the 137th Psalm, which so beautifully commences, "By the waters of Babylon there we sat down." One of them is supposed to be the composition of Moses.

without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needleworks and embroideries, it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground: judge therefore, of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed, or crushed: for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue.*

VI.—OF SIMULATION AND DISSIMULATION.

Dissimulation is but a faint kind of policy, or wisdom; for it asketh a strong wit and a strong heart to know when to tell truth, and to do it: therefore it is the weaker sort of politicians that are the great dissemblers.

Tacitus saith, "Livia sorted well with the arts of her husband, and dissimulation of her son; attributing arts or policy to Augustus, and dissimulation to Tiberius:" and again, when Mucianus encourageth Vespasian to take arms against Vitellius, he saith, "We rise not against the piercing judgment of Augustus, nor the extreme caution or closeness of Tiberius." These properties of arts or policy, and dissimulation or closeness, are indeed habits and faculties several, and to be dis-

* This fine passage, beginning at "Prosperity is the blessing," which was not published till 1625, twenty-eight years after the first Essays, has been quoted by Macaulay, with considerable justice, as a proof that the writer's fancy did not decay with the advance of old age, and that his style in his latter years became richer and softer. The learned Critic contrasts this passage with the terse style of the Essay of Studies (Essay 50), which was published in 1597.

tinguished; for if a man have that penetration of judgment as he can discern what things are to be laid open, and what to be secreted, and what to be showed at half-lights, and to whom and when (which indeed are arts of state, and arts of life, as Tacitus well calleth them), to him a habit of dissimulation is a hinderance and a poorness. But if a man cannot attain to that judgment, then it is left to him generally to be close, and a dissembler: for where a man cannot choose or vary in particulars, there it is good to take the safest and wariest way in general, like the going softly, by one that cannot well see. Certainly, the ablest men that ever were, have had all an openness and frankness of dealing, and a name of certainty and veracity: but then they were like horses well managed, for they could tell passing well when to stop or turn; and at such times when they thought the case indeed required dissimulation, if then they used it, it came to pass that the former opinion spread abroad, of their good faith and clearness of dealing, made them almost invisible.

There be three degrees of this hiding and veiling of a man's self: the first, closeness, reservation, and secrecy; when a man leaveth himself without observation, or without hold to be taken, what he is: the second, dissimulation in the negative; when a man lets fall signs and arguments, that he is not that he is: and the third, simulation in the affirmative; when a man industriously and expressly feigns and pretends to be that he is not.

For the first of these, secrecy, it is indeed the virtue of a confessor; and assuredly the secret man heareth many confessions; for who will open himself to a blab or a babbler? But if a man be thought secret, it inviteth discovery, as the more close air sucketh in the more

open; and, as in confession, the revealing is not for worldly use, but for the ease of a man's heart, so secret men come to the knowledge of many things in that kind; while men rather discharge their minds than impart their minds. In few words, mysteries are due to secrecy. Besides (to say truth), nakedness is uncomely, as well in mind as body; and it addeth no small reverence to men's manners and actions, if they be not altogether open. As for talkers, and futile persons, they are commonly vain and credulous withal: for he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not; therefore set it down, that a habit of secrecy is both politic and moral: and in this part it is good that a man's face give his tongue leave to speak; for the discovery of a man's self, by the tracts* of his countenance, is a great weakness and betraying, by how much it is many times more marked and believed than a man's word.

For the second, which is dissimulation, it followeth many times upon secrecy by a necessity; so that he that will be secret must be a dissembler in some degree; for men are too cunning to suffer a man to keep an indifferent carriage between both, and to be secret, without swaying the balance on either side. They will so beset a man with questions, and draw him on, and pick it out of him, that without an absurd silence, he must show an inclination one way; or if he do not, they will gather as much by his silence as by his speech. As for equivocations, or oraculous speeches, they cannot hold out long: so that no man can be secret, except he give himself a little scope of dissimulation, which is, as it were, but the skirts or train of secrecy.

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* A word now unused, signifying the "traits" or "features."

But for the third degree, which is simulation and false profession, that I hold more culpable, and less politic, except it be in great and rare matters: and, therefore, a general custom of simulation (which is this last degree) is a vice rising either of a natural falseness, or fearfulness, or of a mind that hath some main faults; which, because a man must needs disguise, it maketh him practise simulation in other things, lest his hand should be out of use.

The advantages of simulation and dissimulation are three: first, to lay asleep opposition, and to surprise; for where a man's intentions are published, it is an alarm to call up all that are against them: the second is, to reserve to a man's self a fair retreat; for if a man engage himself by a manifest declaration, he must go through, or take a fall: the third is, the better to discover the mind of another; for to him that opens himself men will hardly show themselves adverse; but will (fair) let him go on, and turn their freedon of speech to freedom of thought; and therefore it is a good shrewd proverb of the Spaniards, "Tell a lie and find a troth;"* as if there were no way of discovery by simulation. There be also three disadvantages to set it even; the first, that simulation and dissimulation commonly carry with them a show of fearfulness, which, in any business doth spoil the feathers of round flying up to the mark; the second, that it puzzleth and perplexeth the conceits of many, that, perhaps, would otherwise co-operate with him, and makes a man walk almost alone to his own ends; the third, and greatest, is, that it depriveth a man of one of the most principal instruments for action, which is trust and belief. The best composition and

* A truth.

temperature is, to have openness in fame and opinion; secrecy in habit; dissimulation in seasonable use; and a power to feign if there be no remedy.

VII.—OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

THE joys of parents are secret, and so are their griefs and fears; they cannot utter the one, nor they will not utter the other. Children sweeten labors, but they make misfortunes more bitter; they increase the cares of life, but they mitigate the remembrance of death. The perpetuity by generation is common to beasts; but memory, merit, and noble works, are proper to men: and surely a man shall see the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men, which have sought to express the images of their minds where those of their bodies have failed; so the care of posterity is most in them that have no posterity. They that are the first raisers of their houses are most indulgent towards their children, beholding them as the continuance, not only of their kind, but of their work; and so both children and creatures.

The difference in affection of parents towards their several children is many times unequal, and sometimes unworthy, especially in the mother; as Solomon saith, "A wise son rejoiceth the father, but an ungracious son shames the mother."* A man shall see, where there is a house full of children, one or two of the eldest respected, and the youngest made wantons;† but in the midst some that are as it were forgotten, who, many times, nevertheless, prove the

* Proverbs x. 1: "A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."

† Petted—spoiled.

best. The illiberality of parents, in allowance towards their children, is a harmful error, makes them base, acquaints them with shifts, makes them sort with mean company, and makes them surfeit more when they come to plenty: and, therefore, the proof * is best when men keep their authority towards their children, but not their purse. Men have a foolish manner (both parents, and schoolmasters, and servants), in creating and breeding an emulation between brothers during childhood, which many times sorteth to discord when they are men, and disturbeth families.† The Italians make little difference between children and nephews, or near kinsfolk; but so they be of the lump, they care not, though they pass not through their own body; and, to say truth, in nature it is much a like matter; insomuch that we see a nephew sometimes resembleth an uncle or a kinsman, more than his own parent, as the blood happens. Let parents choose betimes the vocations and courses they mean their children should take, for then they are most flexible, and let them not too much apply themselves to the disposition of their children, as thinking they will take best to that which they have most mind to. It is true, that if the affection, or aptness of the children be extraordinary, then it is good not to cross it; but generally the precept is good, "Optimum, elige,

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* This word seems here to mean "a plan" or "method" as proved by its results.

† There is considerable justice in this remark. Children should be taught to do what is right for its own sake, and because it is their duty to do so, and not that they may have the selfish gratification of obtaining the reward which their companions have failed to secure, and of being led to think themselves superior to their companions. When launched upon the world, emulation will be quite sufficiently forced upon them by stern necessity.

suave et facile illud faciet consuetudo."* Younger brothers are commonly fortunate, but seldom or never where the elder are disinherited.

VIII.—OF MARRIAGE AND SINGLE LIFE.

He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men, which both in affection and means have married and endowed the public. Yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times, unto which they know they must transmit their dearest pledges. Some there are who, though they lead a single life, yet their thoughts do end with themselves, and account future times impertinences; nay, there are some other that account wife and children but as bills of charges; nay more, there are some foolish rich covetous men, that take a pride in having no children, because they may be thought so much the richer; for, perhaps they have heard some talk, "Such an one is a great rich man," and another except to it, "Yea, but he hath a great charge of children," as if it were an abatement to his riches: but the most ordinary cause of a single life is liberty, especially in certain self-pleasing and humorous minds, which are so sensible of every restraint, as they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles. Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants; but not always best subjects, for they are light to run away, and almost all

* "Select *that course of life* which is the most advantageous: habit will soon render it pleasant and easily endured."

fugitives are of that condition. A single life doth well with churchmen, for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool.* It is indifferent for judges and magistrates; for if they be facile and corrupt, you shall have a servant five times worse than a wife. For soldiers, I find the generals commonly, in their hortatives, put men in mind of their wives and children; and I think the despising of marriage amongst the Turks maketh the vulgar soldier more base. Certainly wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity; and single men, though they be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust, yet, on the other side, they are more cruel and hard-hearted (good to make severe inquisitors), because their tenderness is not so oft called upon. Grave natures, led by custom, and therefore constant, are commonly loving husbands, as was said of Ulysses, "Vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati,"† Chaste women are often proud and froward, as presuming upon the merit of their chastity. It is one of the best bonds, both of chastity and obedience, in the wife, if she think her husband wise, which she will never do if she find him jealous. Wives are young men's mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men's nurses, so as a man may have a quarrel‡ to marry when he will: but yet he was reputed one of the wise men that made answer to the question when a man should marry: "A young

* His meaning is, that if clergymen have the expenses of a family to support, they will hardly find means for the exercise of benevolence toward their parishoners.

† "He preferred his aged wife *Penelope* to immortality." This was when Ulysses was entreated by the goddess Calypso to give up all thoughts of returning to Ithaca, and to remain with her in the enjoyment of immortality.

‡ "May have a pretext," or "excuse."

man not yet, an elder man not at all." It is often seen that bad husbands have very good wives; whether it be that it raiseth the price of their husband's kindness when it comes, or that the wives take a pride in their patience; but this never fails, if the bad husbands were of their own choosing, against their friends' consent, for then they will be sure to make good their own folly.

IX.—OF ENVY.

THERE be none of the affections which have been noted to fascinate or bewitch, but love and envy: they both have vehement wishes; they frame themselves readily into imaginations and suggestions, and they come easily into the eye, especially upon the presence of the objects which are the points that conduce to fascination, if any such thing there be. We see, likewise, the Scripture calleth envy an evil eye;* and the astrologers call the evil influences of the stars evil aspects; so that still there seemeth to be acknowledged, in the act of envy, an ejaculation, or irradiation of the eye; nay, some have been so curious as to note, that the times, when the stroke or percussion of an envious eye doth most hurt, are, when the party envied is beheld in glory

* So prevalent in ancient times was the notion of the injurious effects of the eye of envy, that in common parlance the Romans generally used the word "præfiscini," "without risk of enchantment," or "fascination," when they spoke in high terms of themselves. They supposed that they thereby averted the effects of enchantment produced by the evil eye of any envious person who might at that moment possibly be looking upon them. Lord Bacon probably here alludes to St. Mark vii. 21, 22: "Out of the heart of men proceedeth—deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye." Solomon also speaks of the evil eye, Prov. xxiii, 6, and xxvii, 22.

or triumph; for that sets an edge upon envy: and besides, at such times, the spirits of the person envied do come forth most into the outward parts, and so meet the blow.

But leaving these curiosities (though not unworthy to be thought on in fit place), we will handle what persons are apt to envy others, what persons are most subject to be envied themselves, and what is the difference between public and private envy.

A man that hath no virtue in himself ever envieth virtue in others; for men's minds will either feed upon their own good, or upon others' evil; and who wanteth the one will prey upon the other; and whoso is out of hope to attain to another's virtue, will seek to come at even hand,* by depressing another's fortune.

A man that is busy and inquisitive is commonly envious; for to know much of other men's matters cannot be, because all that ado may concern his own estate; therefore it must needs be that he taketh a kind of play-pleasure in looking upon the fortunes of others: neither can he that mindeth but his own business find much matter for envy; for envy is a gadding passion, and walketh the street, and does not keep home: "Non est curiosus, quin idem sit malevolus."†

Men of noble birth are noted to be envious towards new men when they rise; for the distance is altered: and it is like a deceit of the eye, that when others come on they think themselves go back.

Deformed persons and eunuchs, and the old men and bastards, are envious; for he that cannot possibly mend his own case, will do what he can to impair another's;

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* To be even with him.

† "There is no person a busy-body but what he is ill-natured too." This passage is from the Stichus of Plautus.

except these defects light upon a very brave and heroic nature, which thinketh to make his natural wants part of his honor; in that it should be said, "That a eunuch, or a lame man, did such great matters," affecting the honor of a miracle: as it was in Narses* the eunuch, and Agesilaus and Tamerlane,† that were lame men.

The same is the case of men that rise after calamities and misfortunes; for they are as men fallen out with the times, and think other men's harms a redemption of their own sufferings.

They that desire to excel in too many matters, out of levity and vain-glory, are ever envious, for they cannot want work: it being impossible, but many, in some of those things, should surpass them; which was the character of Adrian the emperor, that mortally envied poets and painters, and artificers in works, wherein he had a vein to excel.

Lastly, near kinsfolk and fellows in office, and those that have been bred together, are more apt to envy

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* Narses superseded Belisarius in the command of the armies of Italy, by the orders of the Emperor Justinian. He defeated Totila, the king of the Goths (who had taken Rome), in a decisive engagement, in which the latter was slain. He governed Italy with consummate ability for thirteen years, when he was ungratefully recalled by Justin the Second, the successor of Justinian.

† Tamerlane, or Timour, was a native of Samarcand, of which territory he was elected emperor. He overran Persia, Georgia, Hindostan, and captured Bajazet, the valiant Sultan of the Turks, at the battle of Angora, 1402, whom he is said to have inclosed in a cage of iron. His conquests extended from the Irtish and Volga to the Persian Gulf and from the Ganges to the Grecian Archipelago. While preparing for the invasion of China, he died, in the 70th year of his age, A.D. 1405. He was tall and corpulent in person, but was maimed in one hand, and lame on the right side.

their equals when they are raised; for it doth upbraid unto them their own fortunes, and pointeth at them, and cometh oftener into their remembrance, and incurreth likewise more into the note* of others; and envy ever redoubleth from speech and fame. Cain's envy was the more vile and malignant towards his brother Abel, because when his sacrifice was better accepted, there was nobody to look on. Thus much for those that are apt to envy.

Concerning those that are more or less subject to envy: First, persons of eminent virtue, when they are advanced, are less envied, for their fortune seemeth but due unto them; and no man envieth the payment of a debt, but rewards and liberality rather. Again, envy is ever joined with the comparing of a man's self; and where there is no comparison, no envy; and therefore kings are not envied but by kings. Nevertheless, it is to be noted, that unworthy persons are most envied at their first coming in, and afterwards overcome it better; whereas, contrariwise, persons of worth and merit are most envied when their fortune continueth long; for by that time, though their virtue be the same, yet it hath not the same lustre; for fresh men grow up that darken it.

Persons of noble blood are less envied in their rising; for it seemeth but right done to their birth; besides, there seemeth not so much added to their fortune; and envy is as the sunbeams, that beat hotter upon a bank or steep rising ground, than upon a flat; and, for the same reason, those that are advanced by degrees are less envied than those that are advanced suddenly, and "per saltum."†

* Comes under the observation.

† "By a leap," *i.e.*, over the heads of others.

Those that have joined with their honor great travels, cares, or perils, are less subject to envy; for men think that they earn their honors hardly, and pity them sometimes; and pity ever healeth envy: wherefore you shall observe, that the more deep and sober sort of politic persons, in their greatness, are ever bemoaning themselves what a life they lead, chanting a "quanta patimur;" * not that they feel it so, but only to abate the edge of envy: but this is to be understood of business that is laid upon men, and not such as they call unto themselves; for nothing increaseth envy more than an unnecessary and ambitious engrossing of business; and nothing doth extinguish envy more than for a great person to preserve all other inferior officers in their full rights and pre-eminences of their places; for, by that means, there be so many screens between him and envy.

Above all, those are most subject to envy, which carry the greatness of their fortunes in an insolent and proud manner: being never well but while they are, showing how great they are, either by outward pomp, or by triumphing over all opposition or competition: whereas wise men will rather do sacrifice to envy, in suffering themselves, sometimes of purpose, to be crossed and overborne in things that do not much concern them. Notwithstanding so much is true, that the carriage of greatness in a plain and open manner (so it be without arrogancy and vain-glory) doth draw less envy than if it be in a more crafty and cunning fashion; for in that course a man doth but disavow fortune, and seemeth to be conscious of his own want in worth, and doth but teach others to envy him.

Lastly, to conclude this part, as we said in the be-

* "How vast *the evils* we endure."

ginning that the act of envy had somewhat in it of witchcraft, so there is no other cure of envy but the cure of witchcraft; and that is, to remove the lot (as they call it), and to lay it upon another; for which purpose the wiser sort of great persons bring in ever upon the stage somebody upon whom to derive the envy that would come upon themselves; sometimes upon ministers and servants, sometimes upon colleagues and associates, and the like; and, for that turn, there are never wanting some persons of violent and undertaking natures, who, so they may have power and business, will take it at any cost.

Now, to speak of public envy: there is yet some good in public envy, whereas in private there is none; for public envy is as an ostracism,* that eclipseth men when they get too great; and therefore it is a bridle also to great ones, to keep them within bounds.

This envy, being in the Latin word "invidia,"† goeth in the modern languages by the name of discontentment; of which we shall speak in handling sedition. It is a disease in a state like to infection; for as infection spreadeth upon that which is sound, and tainteth it, so, when envy is gotten once into a state, it traduceth even the best actions thereof, and turneth them into an ill odor; and therefore there is little won by intermingling of plausible actions; for that doth argue but a weakness and a fear of envy, which hurteth so much the more, as it is likewise usual in infections, which, if you fear them, you call them upon you.

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* He probably alludes to the custom of the Athenians, who frequently ostracised or banished by vote their public men, lest they should become too powerful.

† From "in" and "video," "to look upon;" with reference to the so-called "evil eye" of the envious.

This public envy seemeth to beat chiefly upon principal officers or ministers, rather than upon kings and estates themselves. But this is a sure rule, that if the envy upon the minister be great, when the cause of it in him is small; or if the envy be general in a manner upon all the ministers of an estate, then the envy (though hidden) is truly upon the state itself. And so much of public envy or discontentment, and the difference thereof from private envy, which was handled in the first place.

We will add this in general, touching the affection of envy, that of all other affections it is the most importune and continual; for of other affections there is occasion given but now and then; and therefore it was well said, "Invidia festos dies non agit:" * for it is ever working upon some or other. And it is also noted, that love and envy do make a man pine, which other affections do not, because they are not so continual. It is also the vilest affection, and the most depraved; for which cause it is the proper attribute of the devil, who is called "The envious man, that soweth tares amongst the wheat by night;" † as it always cometh to pass that envy worketh subtilely, and in the dark, and to the prejudice of good things, such as is the wheat.

X.—OF LOVE.

The stage is more beholding to love than the life of man; for as to the stage, love is ever matter of comedies, and now and then of tragedies; but in life it doth much mischief, sometimes like a Siren, sometimes like a Fury. You may observe, that amongst all the great and worthy persons (whereof the memory remaineth,

* "Envy keeps no holidays." † See St. Matthew xiii. 25.

either ancient or recent), there is not one that hath been transported to the mad degree of love, which shows that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion. You must except, nevertheless, Marcus Antonius, the half partner of the empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius,* the Decemvir and lawgiver; whereof the former was indeed a voluptuous man, and inordinate; but the latter was an austere and wise man: and therefore it seems (though rarely) that love can find entrance, not only into an open heart, but also into a heart well fortified, if watch be not well kept. It is a poor saying of Epicurus, "Satis magnum alter alteri theatrum sumus:"† as if man, made for the contemplation of heaven and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol, and make himself subject, though not of the mouth (as beasts are), yet of the eye, which was given him for higher purposes. It is a strange thing to note the excess of this passion, and how it braves the nature and value of things by this, that the speaking in a perpetual hyper-

* He iniquitously attempted to obtain possession of the person of Virginia, who was killed by her father Virginius, to prevent her from falling a victim to his lust. This circumstance caused the fall of the Decemvir at Rome, who had been employed in framing the code of laws afterwards known as "The Laws of the Twelve Tables." They narrowly escaped being burnt alive by the infuriated populace.

† "We are a sufficient theme for contemplation, the one for the other." Pope seems, notwithstanding this censure of Bacon, to have been of the same opinion with Epicurus:—

> "Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
> The proper study for mankind is man."
>
> *Essay on Man*, Ep. ii. 1, 2.

Indeed Lord Bacon seems to have misunderstood the saying of Epicurus, who did not mean to recommend man as the sole object of the bodily vision, but as the proper theme for mental contemplation.

bole is comely in nothing but in love; neither is it merely in the phrase; for whereas it hath been well said, "That the arch flatterer, with whom all the petty flatterers have intelligence, is a man's self;" certainly the lover is more; for there was never proud man thought so absurdly well of himself as the lover doth of the person loved; and therefore it was well said, "That it is impossible to love and to be wise." Neither doth this weakness appear to others only, and not to the party loved, but to the loved most of all, except the love be reciprocal; for it is a true rule, that love is ever rewarded, either with reciprocal, or with an inward and secret contempt; by how much the more men ought to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things, but itself. As for the other losses, the poet's relation* doth well figure them: "That he that preferred Helena, quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas;" for whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affection, quitteth both riches and wisdom. This passion hath his floods in the very times of weakness, which are, great prosperity and great adversity, though this latter hath been less observed; both which times kindle love, and make it more fervent, and therefore show it to be the child of folly. They do best who, if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter, and sever it wholly from their serious affairs and actions of life; for if it check once with business, it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men that they can nowise be true to their own ends. I know not how, but martial men are given to love: I think it is, but as they are given to wine, for perils commonly ask to be paid in pleasures. There is in man's nature a secret inclination and motion

* He refers here to the judgment of Paris, mentioned by Ovid in his Epistles, of the Heroines.

towards love of others, which, if it be not spent upon some one or a few, doth naturally spread itself towards many, and maketh men become humane and charitable, as it is seen sometimes in friars. Nuptial love maketh mankind, friendly love perfecteth it, but wanton love corrupteth and embaseth it.

XI.—OF GREAT PLACE.

Men in great place are thrice servants—servants of the sovereign or state, servants of fame, and servants of business; so as they have no freedom, neither in their persons, nor in their actions, nor in their times. It is a strange desire to seek power and to lose liberty; or to seek power over others, and to lose power over a man's self. The rising unto place is laborious, and by pains men come to greater pains; and it is sometimes base, and by indignities men come to dignities. The standing is slippery, and the regress is either a downfall, or at least an eclipse, which is a melancholy thing: "Cum non sis qui fueris, non esse cur velis vivere."* Nay, retire men cannot when they would, neither will they when it were reason; but are impatient of privateness even in age and sickness, which require the shadow; like old townsmen, that will be still sitting at their street-door, though thereby they offer age to scorn. Certainly great persons had need to borrow other men's opinions to think themselves happy; for if they judge by their own feeling, they cannot find it: but if they think with themselves what other men think of them, and that other men would fain be as they are, then they are happy as it were by report, when, perhaps, they find the contrary within; for they are the first that find their

* "Since you are not what you were, there is no reason why you should wish to live."

own griefs, though they be the last that find their own faults. Certainly men in great fortunes are strangers to themselves, and while they are in the puzzle of business they have no time to tend their health either of body or mind. "Illi mors gravis incubat, qui notus nimis omnibus, ignotus moritur sibi."* In place there is license to do good and evil; whereof the latter is a curse: for in evil the best condition is not to will, the second not to can. But power to do good is the true and lawful end of aspiring; for good thoughts, though God accept them, yet towards men are little better than good dreams, except they be put in act; and that cannot be without power and place, as the vantage and commanding ground. Merit and good works is the end of man's motion; and conscience of the same is the accomplishment of man's rest: for if a man can be partaker of God's theatre, he shall likewise be partaker of God's rest. "Et conversus Deus, ut aspiceret opera, quæ fecerunt manus suæ, vidit quod omnia essent bona nimis;"† and then the Sabbath.

In the discharge of thy place set before thee the best examples; for imitation is a globe of precepts; and after a time set before thee thine own example; and examine thyself strictly whether thou didst not best at first. Neglect not also the examples of those that have carried themselves ill in the same place; not to set off thyself by taxing their memory, but to direct thyself what to avoid. Reform, therefore, without bravery or scandal of former times and persons; but yet set it

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* "Death presses heavily upon him, who, well-known to all others, dies unknown to himself."

† "And God turned to behold the works which his hands had made, and he saw that everything was very good."—See Gen. i. 31.

down to thyself, as well to create good precedents as to follow them. Reduce things to the first institution, and observe wherein and how they have degenerated; but yet ask counsel of both times—of the ancient time what is best, and of the latter time what is fittest. Seek to make thy course regular, that men may know beforehand what they may expect; but be not too positive and peremptory; and express thyself well when thou digressest from thy rule. Preserve the rigut of thy place, but stir not questions of jurisdiction; and rather assume thy right in silence, and "de facto,"* than voice it with claims and challenges. Preserve likewise the rights of inferior places; and think it more honor to direct in chief than to be busy in all. Embrace and invite helps and advices touching the execution of thy place; and do not drive away such as bring thee information as meddlers, but accept of them in good part. The vices of authority are chiefly four: delays, corruption, roughness and facility For delays give easy access; keep times appointed; go through with that which is in hand, and interlace not business but of necessity. For corruption, do not only bind thine own hands or thy servant's hands from taking, but bind the hands of suitors also from offering; for integrity used doth the one; but integrity professed, and with a manifest detestation of bribery, doth the other; and avoid not only the fault, but the suspicion. Whosoever is found variable, and changeth manifestly without manifest cause, giveth suspicion of corruption: therefore, always when thou changest thine opinion or course, profess it plainly, and declare it, together with the reasons that move thee to change, and do not think to steal it. A servant or a

* "As a matter of course."

favorite, if he be inward, and no other apparent cause of esteem, is commonly thought but a by-way to close corruption. For roughness, it is a needless cause of discontent: severity breedeth fear, but roughness breedeth hate. Even reproofs from authority ought to be grave, and not taunting. As for facility,* it is worse than bribery; for bribes come but now and then; but if importunity or idle respects† lead a man, he shall never be without; as Solomon saith, "To respect persons is not good; for such a man will transgress for a piece of bread."‡

It is most true that was anciently spoken; "A place showeth the man; and it showeth some to the better and some to the worse:" "Omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset,"§ saith Tacitus of Galba; but of Vespasian he saith, "Solus imperantium, Vespasianus mutatus in melius;"‖ though the one was meant of sufficiency, the other of manners and affection. It is an assured sign of a worthy and generous spirit, whom honor amends; for honor is, or should be, the place of virtue; and as in nature things move violently to their place, and calmly in their place, so virtue in ambition is violent, in authority settled and calm. All rising to great place is by a winding stair; and if there be factions, it is good to side a man's self whilst he is in the rising,

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* Too great easiness of access.

† Predilections that are undeserved.

‡ Proverbs xxviii. 21. The whole passage stands thus in our version: "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent. To have respect of persons is not good; for, for a piece of bread that man will transgress."

§ "By the consent of all he was fit to govern, if he had not governed."

‖ "Of the emperors, Vespasian alone changed for the better *after his accession.*"

and to balance himself when he is placed. Use the memory of thy predecessor fairly and tenderly; for if thou dost not, it is a debt will sure be paid when thou art gone. If thou have colleagues, respect them; and rather call them when they look not for it, than exclude them when they have reason to look to be called. Be not too sensible or too remembering of thy place in conversation and private answers to suitors; but let it rather be said, "When he sits in place, he is another man."

XII.—OF BOLDNESS.

It is a trivial grammar-school text, but yet worthy a wise man's consideration. Question was asked of Demosthenes, what was the chief part of an orator? he answered, Action: what next?—Action: what next again?—Action. He said it that knew it best, and had by nature himself no advantage in that he commended. A strange thing, that that part of an orator which is but superficial, and rather the virtue of a player, should be placed so high above those other noble parts of invention, elocution, and the rest; nay, almost alone, as if it were all in all. But the reason is plain. There is in human nature generally more of the fool than of the wise; and therefore those faculties by which the foolish part of men's minds is taken are most potent. Wonderful-like is the case of boldness in civil business; what first?—boldness; what second and third?—boldness; and yet boldness is a child of ignorance and baseness, far inferior to other parts: but, nevertheless, it doth fascinate, and bind hand and foot those that are either shallow in judgment or weak in courage, which are the greatest part; yea, and prevaileth with wise men at weak times; therefore we see it hath done wonders in

popular states, but with senates and princes less; and more, ever upon the first entrance of bold persons into action than soon after; for boldness is an ill keeper of promise. Surely as there are mountebanks for the natural body, so are there mountebanks for the politic body; men that undertake great cures, and perhaps have been lucky in two or three experiments, but want the grounds of science, and therefore cannot hold out; nay, you shall see a bold fellow many times do Mahomet's miracle. Mahomet made the people believe that he would call a hill to him, and from the top of it offer up his prayers for the observers of his law. The people assembled; Mahomet called the hill to come to him again and again; and when the hill stood still, he was never a whit abashed, but said, "If the hill will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go to the hill." So these men when they have promised great matters and failed most shamefully, yet (if they have the perfection of boldness) they will but slight it over, and make a turn, and no more ado. Certainly to men of great judgment, bold persons are a sport to behold; nay, and to the vulgar also boldness hath somewhat of the ridiculous; for if absurdity be the subject of laughter, doubt you not but great boldness is seldom without some absurdity; especially it is a sport to see when a bold fellow is out of countenance, for that puts his face into a most shrunken and wooden posture, as needs it must; for in bashfulness the spirits do a little go and come; but with bold men, upon like occasion, they stand at a stay; like a stale at chess, where it is no mate, but yet the game cannot stir: but this last were fitter for a satire than for a serious observation. This is well to be weighed, that boldness is ever blind; for it seeth not dangers and inconveniences: therefore it is ill in counsel, good in

execution; so that the right use of bold persons is, that they never command in chief, but be seconds and under the direction of others; for in counsel it is good to see dangers, and in execution not to see them except they be very great.

XIII.—OF GOODNESS, AND GOODNESS OF NATURE.

I TAKE goodness in this sense, the effecting of the weal of men, which is that the Grecians call "philanthropia;" and the word humanity (as it is used) is a little too light to express it. Goodness I call the habit, and goodness of nature the inclination. This, of all virtues and dignities of the mind, is the greatest, being the character of the Deity: and without it man is a busy, mischievous, wretched thing, no better than a kind of vermin. Goodness answers to the theological virtue charity, and admits no excess but error. The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall;* the desire of knowledge in excess caused man to fall; but in charity there is no excess, neither can angel or man come in danger by it. The inclination to goodness is imprinted deeply in the nature of man; insomuch, that if it issue not towards men, it will take unto other living creatures; as it is seen in the Turks, a cruel people, who nevertheless are kind to beasts, and give alms to dogs and birds; insomuch as Busbechius† reporteth, a Christian boy in

* It is not improbable that this passage suggested Pope's beautiful lines in the *Essay on Man*, Ep. i. 125–8.

"Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
Men would be angels, angels would be gods.
Aspiring to be gods, if angels fell,
Aspiring to be angels, men rebel."

† Auger Gislen Busbec, or Busbequius, a learned traveler,

Constantinople had like to have been stoned for gagging in a waggishness a long-billed fowl.* Errors, indeed, in this virtue, of goodness or charity, may be committed. The Italians have an ungracious proverb, "Tanto buon che val niente:"—"So good, that he is good for nothing:" and one of the doctors of Italy, Nicholas Machiavel,† had the confidence to put in writ-

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born at Comines, in Flanders, in 1522. He was employed by the Emperor Ferdinand as ambassador to the Sultan Solyman II. He was afterwards ambassador to France, where he died in 1592. His letters relative to his travels in the East, which are written in Latin, contain much interesting information. They were the pocket companion of Gibbon, and are highly praised by him.

* In this instance the stork or crane was probably protected not on the abstract grounds mentioned in the text, but for reasons of state policy and gratitude combined. In Eastern climes the cranes and dogs are far more efficacious than human agency in removing filth and offal, and thereby diminishing the chances of pestilence. Superstitution, also, may have formed another motive, as we learn from a letter written from Adrianople by Lady Montagu, in 1718, that storks were "held there in a sort of religious reverence, because they are supposed to make every winter the pilgrimage to Mecca. To say truth, they are the happiest subjects under the Turkish government, and are so sensible of their privileges, that they walk the streets without fear, and generally build their nests in the lower parts of the houses. Happy are those whose houses are so distinguished, as the vulgar Turks are perfectly persuaded that they will not be that year attacked either by fire or pestilence." Storks are still protected by municipal law in Holland, and roam unmolested about the market-places.

† Nicolo Machiavelli, a Florentine statesman. He wrote "Discourses on the first Decade of Livy," which were conspicuous for their liberality of sentiment, and just and profound reflections. This work was succeeded by his famous treatise. "Il Principe,"—"The Prince," his patron, Cæsar Borgia, being the model of the perfect prince there described by him. The whole scope of this work is directed to one object—the maintenance of

ing, almost in plain terms, "That the Christian faith had given up good men in prey to those that are tyrannical and unjust;" which he spake, because, indeed, there was never law, or sect, or opinion did so much magnify goodness as the Christian religion doth: therefore, to avoid the scandal and the danger both, it is good to take knowledge of the errors of a habit so excellent. Seek the good of other men, but be not in bondage to their faces or fancies; for that is but facility or softness, which taketh an honest mind prisoner. Neither give thou Æsop's cock a gem, who would be better pleased and happier if he had had a barley-corn. The example of God teacheth the lesson truly; "He sendeth his rain, and maketh his sun to shine upon the just and the unjust;" * but he doth not rain wealth, nor shine honor and virtue upon men equally: common benefits are to be communicate with all, but peculiar benefits with choice, And beware how in making the portraiture thou breakest the pattern; for divinity maketh the love of ourselves the pattern: the love of our neighbors but the portraiture: "Sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor, and follow me:"† but sell not all thou hast except thou

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power, however acquired. Though its precepts are no doubt based upon the actual practice of the Italian politicians of that day, it has been suggested by some writers that the work was a covert exposure of the deformity of the shocking maxims that it professes to inculcate. The question of his motives has been much discussed, and is still considered open. The word "Machiavellism" has, however, been adopted to denote all that is deformed, insincere, and perfidious in politics. He died in great poverty, in the year 1527.

* St. Matthew v. 5: "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

† This is a portion of our Saviour's reply to the rich man who asked him what he should do to inherit eternal life: "Then

come and follow me; that is, except thou have a vocation wherein thou mayest do as much good with little means as with great; the otherwise, in feeding the streams, thou driest for fountain. Neither is there only a habit of goodness directed by right reason; but there is in some men, even in nature, a disposition towards it; as, on the other side, there is a natural malignity: for there be that in their nature do not affect the good of others. The lighter sort of malignity turneth but to a crossness, or frowardness, or aptness to oppose, or difficileness, or the like; but the deeper sort to envy, and mere mischief. Such men in other men's calamities, are, as it were, in season, and are ever on the loading part: not so good as the dogs that licked Lazarus' sores,* but like flies that are still buzzing upon anything that is raw; misanthropi, that make it their practice to bring men to the bough, and yet have never a tree for the purpose in their gardens, as Timon † had: such dispositions are the very errors of human nature, and yet they

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Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."—St. Mark x. 21.

* See St. Luke xvi. 21.

† Timon of Athens, as he is generally called (being so styled by Shakespeare in the play which he has founded on his story), was surnamed the "Misanthrope," from the hatred which he bore to his fellow-men. He was attached to Apemantus, another Athenian of similar character to himself, and he professed to esteem Alcibiades, because he foresaw that he would one day bring ruin on his country. Going to the public assembly on one occasion, he mounted the rostrum, and stated that he had a fig-tree on which many worthy citizens had ended their days by the halter; that he was going to cut it down for the purpose of building on the spot, and therefore recommended all such as were inclined to avail themselves of it before it was too late.

are the fittest timber to make great politics of; like to knee timber,* that is good for ships that are ordained to be tossed, but not for building houses that shall stand firm. The parts and signs of goodness are many. If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them: if he be compassionate towards the afflictions of others, it shows that his heart is like the noble tree that is wounded itself when it gives the balm:† if he easily pardons and remits offenses, it shows that his mind is planted above injuries, so that he cannot be shot: if he be thankful for small benefits, it shows that he weighs men's minds, and not their trash: but, above all, if he have St. Paul's perfection, that he would wish to be an anathema ‡ from Christ for the salvation of his brethren, it shows much of a divine nature, and a kind of conformity with Christ himself.

XIV.—OF NOBILITY.

We will speak of nobility first as a portion of an estate, then as a condition of particular persons. A monarchy, where there is no nobility at all, is ever a pure and absolute tyranny, as that of the Turks; for nobility attempers sovereignty, and draws the eyes of the peo-

* A piece of timber that has grown crooked, and has been so cut that the trunk and branch form an angle.

† He probably here refers to the myrrh-tree. Incision is the method usually adopted for extracting the resinous juices of trees: as in the india-rubber and gutta-percha trees.

‡ "A votive," and in the present instance "a vicarious offering." He alludes to the words of St. Paul in his Second Epistle to Timothy ii. 10: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

ple somewhat aside from the line royal: but for democracies they need it not; and they are commonly more quiet and less subject to sedition than where there are stirps of nobles; for men's eyes are upon the business, and not upon the persons; or if upon the persons, it is for the business sake, as fittest, and not for flags and pedigree. We see the Switzers last well, notwithstanding their diversity of religion and of cantons; for utility is their bond, and not respects.* The united provinces of the Low Countries † in their government excel; for where there is an equality the consultations are more indifferent, and the payments and tributes more cheerful. A great and potent nobility addeth majesty to a monarch; but diminisheth power, and putteth life and spirit into the people, but presseth their fortune. It is well when nobles are not too great for sovereignty nor for justice; and yet maintained in that height, as the insolency of inferiors may be broken upon them before it come on too fast upon the majesty of kings. A numerous nobility causeth poverty and inconvenience in a state, for it is a surcharge of expense; and besides, it being of necessity that many of the nobility fall in time to be weak in fortune, it maketh a kind of disproportion between honor and means.

As for nobility in particular persons, it is a reverend thing to see an ancient castle or building not in decay, or to see a fair timber-tree sound and perfect; how much more to behold an ancient noble family, which hath stood against the waves and weathers of time! for new nobility is but the act of power, but ancient nobil-

* "Consideration of," or "predeliction for, particular persons."

† The Low Countries had then recently emancipated themselves from the galling yoke of Spain. They were called the Seven United Provinces of the Netherlands.

ity is the act of time. Those that are first raised to nobility are commonly more virtuous,* but less innocent, than their descendants; for there is rarely any rising but by a commixture of good and evil arts; but it is reason† the memory of their virtues remain to their posterity, and their faults die with themselves. Nobility of birth commonly abateth industry; and he that is not industrious, envieth he that is; besides, noble persons cannot go much higher; and he that standeth at a stay when others rise, can hardly avoid motions of envy. On the other side, nobility extinguisheth the passive envy from others towards them, bocause they are in possession of honor. Certainly, kings that have able men of their nobility shall find ease in employing them, and a better slide into their business; for people naturally bend to them as born in some sort to command.

XV.—OF SEDITIONS AND TROUBLES.

Shepherds of people had need know the calendars of tempests in state, which are commonly greatest when things grow to equality; as natural tempests are greatest about the equinoctia,‡ and as there are certain hollow blasts of wind and secret swellings of seas before a tempest, so are there in states:

——"Ille etiam cæcos instare tumultus
Sæpe monet, fraudesque et operta tumescere bella."§

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* This passage may at first sight appear somewhat contradictory; but he means to say that those who are first ennobled will commonly be found to be more conspicuous for the prominence of their qualities, both good and bad.

† Consistent with reason and justice.

‡ The periods of the Equinoxes.

§ "He often warns, too, that secret revolt is impending, that treachery and open warfare are ready to burst forth."

Libels and licentious discourses against the state, when they are frequent and open; and in like sort false news, often running up and down, to the disadvantage of the state, and hastily embraced, are amongst the signs of troubles. Virgil, giving the pedigree of Fame, saith she was sister to the giants:

"Illam Terra parens, ira irritata Deorum,
Extremam (ut perhibent) Cœo Enceladoque sororem
Progenuit." *

As if fames were the relics of seditions past; but they are no less indeed the preludes of seditions to come. Howsoever he noteth it right, that seditious tumults and seditious fames differ no more but as brother and sister, masculine and feminine; especially if it come to that, that the best actions of a state, and the most plausible, and which ought to give greatest contentment, are taken in ill sense, and traduced: for that shows the envy great, as Tacitus saith, "Conflata magna invidia, seu bene, seu male, gesta premunt."† Neither doth it follow, that because these fames are a sign of troubles, that the suppressing of them with too much severity should be a remedy of troubles; for the despising of them many times checks them best, and the going about to stop them doth but make a wonder long-lived. Also that kind of obedience, which Tacitus speaketh of, is to be held suspected: "Erant in officio, sed tamen qui

* "Mother Earth, exasperated at the wrath of the Deities, produced her, as they tell, a last birth, a sister to *the giants* Cœus and Enceladus."

† "Great public odium once excited, his deeds, whether good or whether bad, cause his downfall." Bacon has here quoted incorrectly, probably from memory. The words of Tacitus are (Hist. B. i. C. 7)—"Inviso semel principe, seu bene, seu male, facta premunt,"—"The ruler once detested, his actions, whether good or whether bad, cause his downfall."

mallent imperantium mandata interpretari, quam exsequi;"* disputing, excusing, cavilling upon mandates and directions, is a kind of shaking off the yoke, and assay of disobedience; especially if in those disputings they which are for the direction speak fearfully and tenderly, and those that are against it audaciously.

Also, as Machiavel noteth well, when princes, that ought to be common parents, make themselves as a party, and lean to a side; it is, as a boat that is overthrown by uneven weight on the one side; as was well seen in the time of Henry the Third of France; for first himself entered league † for the extirpation of the Protestants, and presently after the same league was turned upon himself: for when the authority of princes is made but an accessory to a cause, and that there be other bands that tie faster than the band of sovereignty, kings begin to be put almost out of possession.

Also, when discords, and quarrels, and factions, are carried openly and audaciously, it is a sign the reverence of government is lost; for the motions of the greatest persons in a government ought to be as the motions of the planets under "primum mobile," ‡ according to the old opinion, which is, that every of them is carried swiftly by the highest motion, and softly in their own

* "They attended to their duties, but still, as preferring rather to discuss the commands of their rulers, than to obey them."

† He alludes to the bad policy of Henry the Third of France, who espoused the part of "the League" which was formed by the Duke of Guise and other Catholics for the extirpation of the Protestant faith. When too late, he discovered his error, and, finding his own authority entirely superseded, he caused the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal De Lorraine, his brother, to be assassinated.

‡ "The primary motive power." He alludes to an imaginary center of gravitation, or central body, which was supposed to set all the other heavenly bodies in motion.

motion; and therefore, when great ones in their own particular motion move violently, and as Tacitus expresseth it well, "liberius quam ut imperantium meminissent," * it is a sign the orbs are out of frame: for reverence is that wherewith princes are girt from God, who threateneth the dissolving thereof; "Solvam cingula regum." †

So when any of the four pillars of government are mainly shaken or weakened (which are religion, justice, counsel, and treasure), men had need to pray for fair weather. But let us pass from this part of predictions (concerning which, nevertheless, more light may be taken from that which followeth), and let us speak first of the materials of seditions; then of the motives of them; and thirdly of the remedies.

Concerning the materials of seditions, it is a thing well to be considered; for the surest way to prevent seditions (if the times do bear it) is to take away the matter of them; for if there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire. The matter of seditions is of two kinds; much poverty and much discontentment. It is certain, so many overthrown estates, so many votes for troubles. Lucan noteth well the state of Rome before the civil war:

> "Hinc usura vorax, rapidumque in tempore fœnus,
> Hinc concussa fides, et multis utile bellum." ‡

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* "Too freely to remember their own rulers."

† "I will unloose the girdles of kings." He probably alludes here to the first verse of the 45th chapter of Isaiah: "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have upholden, to subdue nations before him: and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates."

‡ "Hence devouring usury, and interest accumulating in lapse of time,—hence shaken credit, and warfare, profitable to the many."

This same "multis utile bellum," * is an assured and infallible sign of a state disposed to seditions and troubles; and if this poverty and broken estate in the better sort be joined with a want and necessity in the mean people the danger is imminent and great: for the rebellions of the belly are the worst. As for discontentments, they are in the politic body like to humors in the natural, which are apt to gather a preternatural heat and to inflame; and let no prince measure the danger of them by this, whether they be just or unjust: for that were to imagine people to be too reasonable, who do often spurn at their own good; nor yet by this, whether the griefs whereupon they rise be in fact great or small; for they are the most dangerous discontentments where the fear is greater than the feeling: "Dolendi modus, timendi non item:" † besides, in great oppressions, the same things that provoke the patience, do withal mate ‡ the courage; but in fears it is not so; neither let any prince or state be secure concerning discontentments, because they have been often, or have been long, and yet no peril hath ensued: for as it is true that every vapor or fume doth not turn into a storm, so it is nevertheless true that storms, though they blow over divers times, yet may fall at last; and, as the Spanish proverb noteth well, "The cord breaketh at the last by the weakest pull." §

The causes and motives of seditions are, innovation in religion, taxes, alteration of laws and customs, breaking of privileges, general oppression, advancement of unworthy persons, strangers, dearths, disbanded soldiers,

* "Warfare profitable to the many."

† "To grief there is a limit, not so to fear."

‡ "Check," or "daunt."

§ This is similar to the proverb now in common use: "'Tis the last feather that breaks the back of the camel."

factions grown desperate: and whatsoever in offending people joineth and knitteth them in a common cause.

For the remedies, there may be some general preservatives, whereof we will speak: as for the just cure, it must answer to the particular disease: and so be left to counsel rather than rule.

The first remedy, or prevention, is to remove by all means possible that material cause of sedition whereof we spake, which is, want and poverty in the estate:* to which purpose serveth the opening and well-balancing of trade; the cherishing of manufactures; the banishing of idleness; the repressing of waste and excess, by sumptuary laws;† the improvement and husbanding of the soil; the regulating of prices of things vendible; the moderating of taxes and tributes, and the like. Generally, it is to be foreseen that the population of a kingdom (especially if it be not mown down by wars) do not exceed the stock of the kingdom which should maintain them: neither is the population to be reckoned only by number; for a smaller number, that spend more and earn less, do wear out an estate sooner than a greater number that live lower and gather more: therefore the mulitplying of nobility, and other degrees of quality, in an over proportion to the common people,

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* The state.

† Though sumptuary laws are probably just in theory, they have been found impracticable in any other than infant states. Their principle, however, is certainly recognized in such countries as by statutory enactment discountenance gaming. Those who are opposed to such laws upon principle, would do well to look into Bernard Mandeville's "Fable of the Bees,"—or "Private Vices Public Benefits." The Romans had numerous sumptuary laws, and in the middle ages there were many enactments in this country against excess of expenditure upon wearing apparel and the pleasures of the table.

doth speedily bring a state to necessity; and so doth likewise an overgrown clergy, for they bring nothing to the stock;* and, in like manner, when more are bred scholars than preferments can take off.

It is likewise to be remembered, that, forasmuch as the increase of any estate must be upon the foreigner† (for whatsoever is somewhere gotten is somewhere lost), there be but three things which one nation selleth unto another; the commodity, as nature yieldeth it; the manufacture; and the vecture, or carriage; so that, if these three wheels go, wealth will flow as in a spring tide And it cometh many times to pass, that, "materiam superabit opus,"‡ that the work and carriage is more worth than the material, and enricheth a state more: as is notably seen in the Low Countrymen, who have the best mines§ above ground in the world.

Above all things, good policy is to be used, that the treasure and monies in a state be not gathered into few hands: for, otherwise, a state may have a great stock, and yet starve; and money is like muck,‖ not good except to be spread. This is done chiefly by suppressing, or, at least, keeping a straight hand upon the devouring trades of usury, engrossing great pasturages, and the like.

For removing discontentments, or, at least, the danger of them, there is in every state (as we know) two portions of subjects, the nobles and commonalty. When one of these is discontent, the danger is not

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* He means that they do not add to the capital of the country.

† At the expense of foreign countries.

‡ "The workmanship will surpass the material."—Ovid, Metamorph. B. ii. 1, 5.

§ He alludes to the manufactures of Low Countries.

‖ Like manure.

great; for common people are of slow motion, if they be not excited by the greater sort; and the greater sort are of small strength except the multitude be apt and ready to move of themselves; then is the danger, when the greater sort do but wait for the troubling of the waters among the meaner, that then they may declare themselves. The poets feign that the rest of the gods would have bound Jupiter; which he hearing of, by the counsel of Pallas, sent for Briareus, with his hundred hands, to come in to his aid: an emblem, no doubt, to show how safe it is for monarchs to make sure of the good will of common people.

To give moderate liberty for griefs and discontentments to evaporate (so it be without too great insolency or bravery), is a safe way: for he that turneth the humors back, and maketh the wound bleed inwards, endangereth malign ulcers and pernicious imposthumations.

The part of Epimetheus * might well become Prometheus, in the case of discontentments, for there is not a better provision against them. Epimetheus, when griefs and evils flow abroad, at last shut the lid, and kept hope in the bottom of the vessel. Certainly, the

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* The myth of Pandora's box, which is here referred to, is related in the "Works and Days" of Hesiod. Epimetheus was the personification of "Afterthought," while his brother Prometheus represented "Forethought," or prudence. It was not Epimetheus that opened the box, but Pandora,—"All-gift," whom, contrary to the advice of his brother, he had received at the hands of Mercury, and had made his wife. In their house stood a closed jar, which they were forbidden to open. Till her arrival this had been kept untouched: but her curiosity prompting her to open the lid, all the evils hitherto unknown to man flew out and spread over the earth, and she only shut it down in time to prevent the escape of Hope.

politic and artificial nourishing and entertaining of hopes, and carrying men from hopes to hopes, is one of best antidotes against the poison of discontentments: and it is a certain sign of a wise government and proceeding, when it can hold men's hearts by hopes, when it cannot by satisfaction; and when it can handle things in such manner as no evil shall appear so peremptory but that it hath some outlet of hope; which is the less hard to do, because both particular persons and factions are apt enough to flatter themselves, or at least to brave that which they believe not.

Also the foresight and prevention, that there be no likely or fit head whereunto discontented persons may resort, and under whom they may join, is a known, but an excellent point of caution. I understand a fit head to be one that hath greatness and reputation, that hath confidence with the discontented party, and upon whom they turn their eyes, and that is thought discontented in his own particular: which kind of persons are either to be won and reconciled to the state, and that in a fast and true manner; or to be fronted with some other of the same party that may oppose them, and so divide the reputation. Generally, the dividing and breaking of all factions and combinations that are adverse to the state, and setting them at distance, or, at least, distrust amongst themselves, is not one of the worst remedies; for it it a desperate case, if those that hold with the proceeding of the state be full of discord and faction, and those that are against it be entire and united.

I have noted, that some witty and sharp speeches, which have fallen from princes, have given fire to seditions. Cæsar did himself infinite hurt in that speech—

"Sylla nescivit literas, non potuit dictare;"* for it did utterly cut off that hope which men had entertained, that he would at one time or other give over his dictatorship. Galb undid himself by that speech, "Legi a se militem, non emi;"† for it put the soldiers out of hope of the donative. Probus, likewise, by that speech, "Si vixero, non opus erit amplius Romano imperio militibus;"‡ a speech of great despair for the soldiers, and many the like. Surely princes had need in tender matters and ticklish times to beware what they say, especially in these short speeches, which fly abroad like darts, and are thought to be shot out of their secret intentions; for as for large discourses, they are flat things, and not so much noted.

Lastly, let princes, against all events, not be without some great person, one or rather more, of military valor, near unto them, for the repressing of seditions in their beginnings; for without that, there useth to be more trepidation in court upon the first breaking out of troubles than were fit; and the state runneth the danger of that which Tacitus saith; "Atque is habitus animorum fuit, ut pessimum facinus auderent pauci, plures vellent

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* "Sylla did not know his letters, *and so* he could not dictate." This saying is attributed by Suetonius to Julius Cæsar. It is a play on the Latin verb "dictare," which means either "to dictate," or "to act the part of Dictator," according to the context. As this saying was presumed to be a reflection on Sylla's ignorance, and to imply that by reason thereof he was unable to maintain his power, it was concluded by the Roman people that Cæsar, who was an elegant scholar, feeling himself subject to no such inability, did not intend speedily to yield the reins of power.

† "That soldiers were levied by him, not bought."

‡ "If I live, there shall no longer be need of soldiers in the Roman empire."

omnes, paterentur:"* but let such military persons be assured, and well reputed of, rather than factious and popular; holding also good correspondence with the other great men in the state, or else the remedy is worse than the disease.

XVI.—OF ATHEISM.

I HAD rather believe all the fables in the legend,† and the Talmud,‡ and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind; and, therefore, God never wrought miracle to convince atheism, because his ordinary works convince it. It is true, that a little philosophy § inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion; for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them, and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate, and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity: nay, even that school which is most accused of atheism doth most demonstrate religion: that is, the

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* "And such was the state of feeling, that a few dared to perpetrate the worst of crimes; more wished to do so, all submitted to it."

† He probably alludes to the legends or miraculous stories of the saints, such as walking with their heads off, preaching to the fishes, sailing over the sea on a cloak, etc., etc.

‡ This is the book that contains the Jewish traditions, and the Rabbinical explanations of the law. It is replete with wonderful narratives.

§ This passage not improbably contains the germ of Pope's famous lines,—

> "A little learning is a dangerous thing;
> Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring."

school of Leucippus,* and Democritus,† and Epicurus for it is a thousand times more credible that four mutable elements, and one immutable fifth essence,‡ duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions, or seeds unplaced, should have produced this order and beauty without a divine marshal. The Scripture saith, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God;"§ it is not said, "The fool hath thought in his heart;" so as he rather saith it by rote to himself, as that he would have, than that he can thoroughly believe it, or be persuaded of it; for none deny there is a God, but those for whom it maketh‖ that there were no God. It appeareth in nothing more, that atheism is rather in the lip than in the heart of man, than by this, that atheists will ever be talking of that their opinion, as if they fainted in it within themselves, and would be glad to be strengthened by the consent of others; nay more, you shall have atheists strive to get disciples, as it fareth with other sects; and, which is most of all, you shall have of them that will suffer for atheism, and not recant; whereas, if they did truly think that there were no such thing as God, why should they

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* A Philosopher of Abdera; the first who taught the system of atoms, which was afterwards more fully developed by Democritus and Epicurus.

† He was a disciple of the last named philosopher, and held the same principles: he also denied the existence of the soul after death. He is considered to have been the parent of experimental Philosophy, and was the first to teach, what is now confirmed by science, that the Milky Way is an accumulation of stars.

‡ Spirit.

§ Psalm xiv. 1, and liii. 1.

‖ To whose (seeming) advantage it is; the wish being father to the thought.

trouble themselves? Epicurus is charged, that he did but dissemble for his credit's sake, when he affirmed there were blessed natures, but such as enjoyed themselves without having respect to the government of the world; wherein they say he did temporize, though in secret he thought there was no God: but certainly he is traduced, for his words are noble and divine: "Non Deos vulgi negare profanum; sed vulgi opiniones Diis applicare profanum." * Plato could have said no more; and although he had the confidence to deny the administration, he had not the power to deny the nature. The Indians† of the west have names for their particular gods, though they have no name for God: as if the heathens should have had the names Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, etc., but not the word Deus, which shows that even those barbarous people have the notion, though they have not the latitude and extent of it; so that against atheists the very savages take part with the very subtlest philosophers. The contemplative atheist is rare; a Diagoras,‡ a Bion,§ a Lucian‖ perhaps, and

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* "It is not profane to deny *the existence* of the Deities of the vulgar: but to apply to the Divinities the received notions of the vulgar is profane."

† He alludes to the native tribes of the continent of America and the West Indies.

‡ He was an Athenian philosopher, who from the greatest superstition became an avowed atheist. He was proscribed by the Areiopagus for speaking against the gods with ridicule and contempt, and is supposed to have died at Corinth.

§ A Greek philosopher, a disciple of Theodorus the atheist, to whose opinions he adhered. His life was said to have been profligate, and his death superstitious.

‖ Lucian ridiculed the follies and pretensions of some of the ancient philosophers; but though the freedom of his style was such as to cause him to be censured for impiety, he hardly de-

some others; and yet they seem to be more than they are; for that all that impugn a received religion, or superstition, are, by the adverse part, branded with the name of atheists; but the great atheists indeed are hypocrites, which are ever handling holy things but without feeling; so as they must needs be cauterized in the end. The causes of atheism are, divisions in religion, if they be many; for any one main division addeth zeal to both sides, but many divisions introduce atheism: another is, scandal of priests, when it is come to that which St. Bernard saith, "Non est jam dicere, ut populus, sic sacerdos; quia nec sic populus, ut sacerdos:" * a third is, custom of profane scoffing in holy matters, which doth by little and little deface the reverence of religion; and lastly, learned times, specially with peace and prosperity; for troubles and adversities do more bow men's minds to religion. They that deny a God destroy a man's nobility; for certainly man is of kin to the beasts by his body; and if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature. It destroys likewise magnanimity, and the raising of human nature; for take an example of a dog, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on when he finds himself maintained by a man, who to him is instead of a God, or

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serves the stigma of atheism here cast upon him by the learned author.

* "It is not for us now to say, 'Like priest like people,' for the people are not even so *bad* as the priest." St. Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, preached the second Crusade against the Saracens, and was unsparing in his censures of the sins then prevalent among the Christian priesthood. His writings are voluminous, and by some he has been considered as the latest of the fathers of the Church.

melior natura;"* which courage is manifestly such as that creature, without that confidence of a better nature than his own, could never attain. So man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon divine protection and favor, gathereth a force and faith, which human nature in itself could not obtain; therefore, as atheism is in all respects hateful, so in this, that it depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty. As it is in particular persons, so it is in nations: never was there such a state for magnanimity as Rome. Of this state hear what Cicero saith: "Quam volumus, licet, Patres conscripti, nos amemus, tamen nec numero Hispanos, nec robore Gallos, nec calliditate Pœnos, nec artibus Græcos, nec denique hoc ipso hujus gentis et terræ domestico nativoque sensu Italos ipsos et Latinos; sed pietate, ac religione, atque hac una sapientia, quod Deorum immortalium numine omnia regi, gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes, nationesque superavimus."†

XVII.—OF SUPERSTITION.

It were better to have no opinion of God at all than such an opinion as is unworthy of him; for the one is

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* "A superior nature."

† "We may admire ourselves, conscript fathers, as much as we please: still, neither by numbers *did we vanquish* the Spaniards, nor by bodily strength the Gauls, nor by cunning the Carthaginians, nor through the arts the Greeks, nor, in fine, by the inborn and native good sense of this *our* nation, and this *our* race and soil, the Italians and Latins themselves; but through our devotion and our religious feeling, and this, the sole *true* wisdom, the having perceived that all things are regulated and governed by the providence of the immortal Gods, have we subdued all races and nations."

unbelief, the other is contumely:* and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Diety. Plutarch saith well to that purpose, "Surely," saith he, "I had rather a great deal men should say there was no such man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say that there was one Plutarch that would eat his children † as soon as they were born;" as the poets speak of Saturn: and, as the contumely is greater towards God, so the danger is greater towards men. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation: all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not; but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men: therefore, atheism did never perturb states; for it makes men wary of themselves, as looking no further, and we see the times inclined to atheism (as the time of Augustus Cæsar) were civil times; but superstition hath been the confusion of many states, and bringeth in a new "primum mobile," ‡ that ravisheth all the spheres of government. The master of superstition is the people, and in all superstition wise men follow fools: and arguments are fitted to practice in a reversed order. It was gravely said by some of the prelates in the Council of Trent,§ where the doctrine of the schoolmen bare great sway, that the schoolmen

* The justice of this position is perhaps somewhat doubtful. The superstitious man *must* have *some* scruples, while he who believes not in a God (if there is such a person) *needs* have *none*.

† Time was personified in Saturn, and by this story was meant its tendency to destroy whatever it has brought into existence.

‡ The primary motive power.

§ This Council commenced in 1545, and lasted eighteen years. It was convened for the purpose of opposing the rising spirit of Protestantism, and of discussing and settling the disputed points of the Catholic faith.

were like astonomers, which did feign eccentrics* and epicycles,† and such engines of orbs to save‡ the phenomena, though they knew there were no such things; and, in like manner, that the schoolmen had framed a number of subtle and intricate axioms and theorems, to save the practice of the Church. The causes of superstition are, pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness; overgreat reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the Church; the strategems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre; the favoring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits and novelties; the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations; and, lastly, barbarous times, especially joined with calamities and disasters. Superstition, without a veil, is a deformed thing; for as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man, so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed: and as wholesome meat corrupteth to little worms, so good forms and orders corrupt into a number of petty observances. There is a superstition in avoiding superstition, when men think to do best if they go furthest from the superstition formerly received; therefore care would be had that (as it fareth in ill purgings) the good be not taken away with the bad, which commonly is done when the people is the reformer.

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* Irregular or anomalous movements.

† An epicycle is a smallercircle, whose center is in the circumference of a greater one.

‡ To account for.

XVIII.—OF TRAVEL.

TRAVEL, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience. He that traveleth into a country, before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor or grave servant, I allow well; so that he be such a one that hath the language, and hath been in the country before; whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go, what acquaintances they are to seek, what exercises or discipline the place yielded; for else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little. It is a strange thing, that in sea voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries; but in land travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation: let diaries, therefore, be brought in use. The things to be seen and observed are, the courts of princes, especially when they give audience to ambassadors; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes; and so of consistories* ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns; and so the havens and harbors, antiquities and ruins, libraries, colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are; shipping and navies; houses and gardens of state and pleasure, near great cities; armories, arsenals, magazines, exchanges, burses, warehouses, excercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like: comedies, such whereunto the bet-

* Synods, or councils.

ter sort of persons do resort; treasuries of jewels and robes; cabinets and rarities; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go; after all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry. As for triumphs, masks, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not be put in mind of them: yet are they not to be neglected. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do: first, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth; then he must have such a servant, or tutor, as knoweth the country, as was likewise said: let him carry with him also some card, or book, describing the country where he traveleth, which will be a good key to his inquiry; let him keep also a diary; let him not stay long in one city or town, more or less as the place deserveth, but not long; nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another, which is a great adamant of acquaintance; let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he traveleth: let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth, that he may use his favor in those things he desireth to see or know; thus he may abridge his travel with much profit. As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel, that which is most of all profitable, is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men* of ambassadors; for so in traveling in one country he shall suck the expe-

* At the present day called "attachés."

rience of many: let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds, which are of great name abroad, that he may be able to tell how the life agreeth with the fame; for quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided; they are commonly for mistresses, healths,* place, and words; and let a man beware how he keepeth company with choleric and quarrelsome persons; for they will engage him into their own quarrels. When a traveler returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath traveled altogether behind him, but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth; and let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers, than forward to tell stories; and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country.

XIX.—OF EMPIRE.

It is a miserable state of mind to have few things to desire, and many things to fear; and yet that commonly in the case of kings, who being at the highest, want matter of desire,† which makes their minds more languishing; and have many representations of perils and shadows, which makes their minds the less clear; and this is one reason also of that effect which the Scripture speaketh of, "That the king's heart is inscrutable:"‡

* He probably means the refusing to join on the occasion of drinking healths when taking wine.

† Something to create excitement.

‡ "The heart of kings is unsearchable."—Prov. v. 3.

for multitude of jealousies, and lack of some predominant desire, that should marshal and put in order all the rest, maketh any man's heart hard to find or sound. Hence it comes likewise, that princes many times make themselves desires, and set their hearts upon toys; sometimes upon a building; sometimes upon erecting of an order; sometimes upon the advancing of a person; sometimes upon obtaining excellency in some art, or feat of the hand: as Nero for playing on the harp; Domitian for certainty of the hand with the arrow; Commodus for playing at fence;* Caracalla for driving chariots, and the like. This seemeth incredible unto those that know not the principle, that the mind of man is more cheered and refreshed by profiting in small things than by standing at a stay† in great. We see also that kings that have been fortunate conquerors in their first years, it being not possible for them to go forward infinitely, but that they must have some check or arrest in their fortunes, turn in their latter years to be superstitious and melancholy; as did Alexander the Great, Dioclesian,‡ and in our memory, Charles the Fifth,§ and others; for he that is used to go forward, and findeth a stop, falleth out of his own favor, and is not the thing he was.

To speak now of the true temper of empire, it is a thing rare and hard to keep; for both temper and distemper consist of contraries; but it is one thing to min-

* Commodus fought naked in public as a gladiator, and prided himself on his skill as a swordsman.

† Making a stop at, or dwelling too long upon.

‡ After a prosperous reign of twenty-one years, Dioclesian abdicated the throne, and retired to a private station.

§ After having reigned thirty-five years, he abdicated the thrones of Spain and Germany, and passed the two last year of his life in retiring at St. Just, a convent in Estremadura.

gle contraries, another to interchange them. The answer of Apollonius to Vespasian is full of excellent instruction. Vespasian asked him, "What was Nero's overthrow?" he answered, "Nero could touch and tune the harp well; but in government sometimes he used to wind the pins too high, sometimes to let them down too low." And certain it is, that nothing destroyeth authority so much as the unequal and untimely interchange of power pressed too far, and relaxed too much.

This is true, that the wisdom of all these latter times in princes' affairs is rather fine deliveries, and shiftings of dangers and mischiefs, when they are near, than solid and grounded courses to keep them aloof: but this is but to try masteries with fortune; and let men beware how they neglect and suffer matter of trouble to be prepared. For no man can forbid the spark, nor tell whence it may come. The difficulties in princes' business are many and great; but the greatest difficulty is often in their own mind. For it is common with princes (saith Tacitus) to will contradictories: "Sunt plerumque regum voluntates vehementes, et inter se contrariæ;" * for it is the solecism of power to think to command the end, and yet not to endure the mean.

Kings have to deal with their neighbors, their wives, their children, their prelates or clergy, their nobles, their second nobles or gentlemen, their merchants, their commons, and their men of war; and from all these arise dangers, if care and circumspection be not used.

First, for their neighbors, there can no general rule be given (the occasions are so variable), save one which ever holdeth; which is, that princes do keep due senti-

* "The desires of monarchs are generally impetuous and conflicting among themselves."

nel that none of their neighbors do overgrow so (by increase of territory, by embracing of trade, by approaches, or the like), as they become more able to annoy them than they were; and this is generally the work of standing counsels to foresee and to hinder it. During that triumvirate of kings, King Henry the Eighth of England, Francis the First, King of France,* and Charles the Fifth, Emperor, there was such a watch kept that none of the three could win a palm of ground, but the other two would straightways balance it, either by confederation, or, if need were, by a war; and would not in anywise take up peace at interest; and the like was done by that league (which Guicciardini† saith was the security of Italy), made between Ferdinando, King of Naples, Lorenzius Medicis, and Ludovicus Sforza, potentates, the one of Florence, the other of Milan. Neither is the opinion of some of the schoolmen to be received, that a war cannot justly be made, but upon a precedent injury or provocation; for there is no question, but a just fear of an imminent danger, though there be no blow given, is a lawful cause of a war.

For their wives, there are cruel examples of them. Livia is infamed‡ for the poisoning of her husband;

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* He was especially the rival of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and was one of the most distinguished sovereigns that ever ruled over France.

† An eminent historian of Florence. His great work, which is here alluded to, is "The History of Italy during his own Time, which is considered one of the most valuable productions of that age.

‡ Spoken badly of. Livia was said to have hastened the death of Augustus, to prepare the accession of her son Tiberius to the throne.

Roxolana, Solyman's wife* was the destruction of that renowned prince, Sultan Mustapha, and otherwise troubled his house and succession; Edward the Second of England's Queen† had the principal hand in the disposing and murder of her husband.

This kind of danger is then to be feared chiefly when the wives have plots for the raising of their own children, or else that they be advoutresses.‡

For their children, the tragedies likewise of dangers from them have been many; and generally the entering of fathers into suspicion of their children hath been ever unfortunate. The destruction of Mustapha's (that we named before) was so fatal to Solyman's line, as the succession of the Turks from Solyman's until this day is suspected to be untrue, and of strange blood; for that Selymus the Second was thought to be supposititious.§ The destruction of Crispus, a young prince of rare towardness, by Constantinus the Great, his father, was in like manner fatal to his house; for both Constantinus and Constance, his sons, died violent deaths; and Constantinus, his other son, did little better, who died indeed of sickness, but after that Julianus

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* Solyman the Magnificent was one of the most celebrated of the Ottoman monarchs. He took the Isle of Rhodes from the Knights of St. John. He also subdued Moldavia, Wallachia, and the greatest part of Hungary, and took from the Persians, Georgia and Bagdad. He died A.D. 1566. His wife Roxolana (who was originally a slave called Rosa or Hazathya), with the Pasha Rustan, conspired against the life of his son Mustapha, and by their instigation this distinguished prince was strangled in his father's presence.

† The infamous Isabella of Anjou.

‡ Adultresses.

§ He, however, distinguished himself by taking Cyprus from Venetians in the year 1571.

had taken arms against him. The destruction of Demetrius,* son to Philip the Second of Macedon, turned upon the father who died of repentance, and many like examples there are; but few or none where the fathers had good by such distrust, except it were where the sons were up in open arms against them; as was Selymus the First against Bajazet, and the three sons of Henry the Second, King of England.

For their prelates, when they are proud and great, there is also danger from them; as it was in the times of Anselmus† and Thomas Becket, Archbishops of Canterbury, who with their crosiers did almost try it with the King's sword; and yet they had to deal with stout and haughty kings: William Rufus, Henry the First, and Henry the Second. The danger is not from that state, but where it hath a dependence of foreign authority; or where the churchmen come in and are elected, not by the collation of the king or particular patrons, but by the people.

For their nobles, to keep them at a distance is not amiss; but to depress them may make a king more absolute, but less safe, and less able to perform anything he desires. I have noted it in my History of King Henry the Seventh of England, who depressed his nobility, whereupon it came to pass that his times were full of difficulties and troubles; for the nobility, though they

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* He was falsely accused by his brother Perseus of attempting to dethrone his father, on which he was put to death by the order of Philip, B.C. 180.

† Anselm was archbishop of Canterbury in the time of William Rufus and Henry the First. Though his private life was pious and exemplary, through his rigid assertions of the rights of the clergy, he was continually embroiled with his sovereign. Thomas à Becket pursued a similar course, but with still greater violence.

continued loyal unto him, yet did they not co-operate with him in his business, so that in effect he was fain to to do all things himself.

For their second nobles, there is not much danger from them, being a body dispersed: they may sometimes discourse high, but that doth little hurt: besides, they are a counterpoise to the higher nobility, that they grow not too potent; and, lastly, being the most immediate in authority with the common people, they do best temper popular commotions.

For their merchants, they are "vena porta;"* and if they flourish not, a kingdom may have good limbs, but will have empty veins, and nourish little. Taxes and imposts upon them do seldom good to the king's revenue, for that which he wins† in the hundred,‡ he loseth in the shire; the particular rates being increased, but the total bulk of trading rather decreased.

For their commons, there is little danger from them, except it be where they have great and potent heads, or where you meddle with the point of religion, or their customs or means of life.

For the men of war,§ it is a dangerous state where they live and remain in a body, and are used to donatives whereof we see examples in the Janizaries ‖ and

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* The great vessel that conveys the blood to the liver, after it has been enriched by the absorption of nutriment from the intestines.

† This is an expression similar to our proverb, "Penny-wise and pound-foolish.

‡ A subdivision of the shire.

§ Soldiers.

‖ The Janizaries were the body-guards of the Turkish sultans, and enacted the same disgraceful part in making and unmaking monarchs as the mercenary Prætorian guards of the Roman empire.

Prætorian bands of Rome; but training of men, and arming them in several places, and under several commanders, and without donatives, are things of defense, and no danger.

Princes are like to heavenly bodies, which cause good or evil times; and which have much veneration, but no rest. All precepts concerning kings are in effect comprehended in those two remembrances, "Memento quod es homo;"* and "Memento quod es Deus," † or "vice Dei;" ‡ the one bridleth their power, and the other their will.

XX.—OF COUNSEL.

The greatest trust between man and man is the trust of giving counsel; for in other confidences men commit the parts of life, their lands, their goods, their children, their credit, some particular affair; but to such as they make their counsellors they commit the whole: by how much the more they are obliged to all faith and integrity. The wisest princes need not think it any diminution to their greatness or derogation to their sufficiency to rely upon counsel. God himself is not without, but hath made it one of the great names of his blessed Son, "The Counsellor." § Solomon hath pronounced that, "In counsel is stability." ‖ Things will have their first or second agitation: if they be not tossed upon the arguments of counsel, they will be tossed upon waves of

* "Remember that thou art a man."

† "Remember that thou art a God."

‡ "The representative of God."

§ Isaiah ix. 6: "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

‖ Prov. xx. 18: "Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war."

fortune; and be full of inconstancy, doing and undoing, like the reeling of a drunken man. Solomon's son* found the force of counsel, as his father saw the necessity of it: for the beloved kingdom of God was first rent and broken by ill counsel; upon which counsel there are set for our instruction the two marks whereby bad counsel is forever best discerned, that it was young counsel for the persons, and violent counsel for the matter.

The ancient times do set forth in figure both the incorporation and inseparable conjunction of counsel with kings, and the wise and politic use of counsel by kings: the one in that they say Jupiter did marry Metis, which signifieth counsel; whereby they intend that sovereignty is married to counsel; the other, in that which followeth, which was thus: they say, after Jupiter was married to Metis, she conceived by him and was with child; but Jupiter suffered her not to stay till she brought forth, but eat her up: whereby he became himself, with child; and was delivered of Pallas armed, out of his head. Which monstrous fable containeth a secret of empire, how kings are to make use of their counsel of state: that first they ought to refer matters unto them, which is the first begetting or impregnation; but when they are elaborate, molded and shaped in the womb of their council, and grow ripe and ready to be brought forth, that then they suffer not their council to go through with the resolution and direction, as if it depended on them; but take the matter back into their own hands, and make it appear to the world that the decrees and final directions (which, because they come forth with prudence and power, are resembled to Pallas

* The wicked Rohoboam, from whom the ten tribes of Israel revolted and elected Jeroboam their king. See I. Kings xii.

armed), proceeded from themselves; and not only from their authority, but (the more to add reputation to themselves) from their head and device.

Let us now speak of the inconveniences of counsel, and of the remedies. The inconveniences that have been noted in calling and using counsel, are three: first, the revealing of affairs, whereby they become less secret; secondly, the weakening of the authority of princes, as if they were less of themselves; thirdly, the danger of being unfaithfully counselled, and more for the good of them that counsel than of him that is counselled; for which inconveniences, the doctrine of Italy, and practice of France, in some kings' times, hath introduced cabinet councils; a remedy worse than the disease.*

As to secrecy, princes are not bound to communicate all matters with all counsellors, but may extract and select; neither is it necessary, that he that consulteth what he should do, should declare what he will do; but let princes beware that the unsecreting of their affairs comes not from themselves: and, as for cabinet councils, it may be their motto, "Plenus rimarum sum:"† one futile person, that maketh it his glory to tell, will do more hurt than many, that know it their duty to conceal. It is true there be some affairs which require extreme secrecy, which will hardly go beyond one or two persons besides the king: neither are those counsels unprosperous; for, besides the secrecy, they commonly go on constantly in one spirit of direction without distraction: but then it must be a prudent king,

* The political world has not been convinced of the truth of this doctrine of Lord Bacon, as cabinet councils are now held probably by every sovereign in Europe.

† "I am full of outlets."

such as is able to grind with a hand-mill;* and those inward counsellors had need also be wise men, and especially true and trusty to the king's ends, as it was with King Henry the Seventh of England, who, in his greatest business imparted himself to none, except it were to Morton† and Fox. ‡

For weakening of authority, the fable§ showeth the remedy: nay, the majesty of kings is rather exalted than diminished when they are in the chair of council; neither was there ever prince bereaved of his dependencies by his council, except where there hath been either an over-greatness in one counsellor, or an over strict combination in divers, which are things soon found and holpen.‖

For the last inconvenience, that men will counsel with an eye to themselves; certainly, "non inveniet fidem super terram," ¶ is meant of the nature of times,** and

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* That is, without a complicated machinery of government.

† Master of the Rolls and Privy Councillor under Henry VI., to whose cause he faithfully adhered. Edward IV. promoted him to the see of Ely, and made him Lord Chancellor. He was elevated to the see of Canterbury by Henry VII., and in 1493 received the Cardinal's hat.

‡ Privy Councillor and Keeper of the Privy Seal to Henry VII.; and after enjoying several bishoprics in succession, translated to the see of Winchester. He was an able statesman, and highly valued by Henry VII. On the accession of Henry VIII., his political influence was counteracted by Wolsey; on which he retired to his diocese, and devoted the rest of his life to acts of piety and munificence.

§ Before mentioned, relative to Jupiter and Metis.

‖ Remedied.

¶ "He shall not find faith upon the earth." Lord Bacon probably alludes to the words of our Saviour, St. Luke xviii. 8: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?"

** He means to say that this remark was only applicable to a

not of all particular persons. There be that are in nature faithful and sincere, and plain and direct, not crafty and involved: let princes, above all, draw to themselves such natures. Besides, counsellors are not commonly so united, but that one counsellor keepeth sentinel over another; so that if any do counsel out of faction or private ends, it commonly comes to the King's ear: but the best remedy is, if princes know their counsellors, as well as their counsellors know them:

"Principis est virtus maxima nosse suos."*

And on the other side, counsellors should not be too speculative into their sovereign's person. The true composition of a counsellor is, rather to be skillful in their master's business than in his nature;† for then he is like to advise him, and not to feed his humor. It is of singular use to princes if they take the opinions of their council both separately and together; for private opinion is more free, but opinion before others is more reserved. In private, men are more bold in their own humors; and in consort, men are more obnoxious‡ to others' humors; therefore it is good to take both; and of the inferior sort rather in private, to preserve freedom; of the greater, rather in consort, to preserve respect. It is in vain for princes to take counsel concerning matters if they take no counsel likewise concerning persons; for all matters are as dead images: and the life of the execution of affairs resteth in the good choice of persons: neither is it enough to consult concerning

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particular time, namely, the coming of Christ. The period of the destruction of Jerusalem was probably referred to.

* "'Tis the especial virtue of a prince to know his own men."

† In his disposition, or inclination.

‡ Liable to opposition from.

persons, "secundum genera," * as in an idea or mathematical description, what the kind and character of the person should be; for the greatest errors are committed, and the most judgment is shown, in the choice of individuals. It was truly said, "Optimi consiliarii mortui:" † "books will speak plain when counsellors blanch;" ‡ therefore it is good to be conversant in them, specially the books of such as themselves have been actors upon the stage.

The councils at this day in most places are but familiar meetings, where matters are rather talked on than debated; and they run too swift to the order or act of council. It were better that in causes of weight the matter were propounded one day and not spoken to till the next day; "In nocte consilium:" § so was it done in the commission of union ‖ between England and Scotland, which was a grave and orderly assembly. I commend set days for petitions; for both it gives the suitors more certainty for their attendance, and it frees the meetings for matters of estate, that they may "hoc agere." ¶ In choice of committees for ripening business for the council, it is better to choose indifferent persons,

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* "According to classes," or, as we vulgarly say, "in the lump." Lord Bacon means that princes are not, as a matter of course, to take counsellors merely on the presumption of talent, from their rank and station: but that, on the contrary, they are to select such as are tried men, and with regard to whom there can be no mistake.

† "The best counsellors are the dead."

‡ "Are afraid to open their mouths."

§ "Night-time for counsel."

‖ On the accession of James the Sixth of Scotland to the throne of England in 1603.

¶ A phrase much in use with the Romans, signifying, "to attend to the business in hand."

than to make an indifferency by putting in those that are strong on both sides. I commend, also, standing commissions; as for trade, for treasure, for war, for suits, for some provinces; for where there be divers particular councils, and but one council of estate (as it is in Spain), they are, in effect, no more than standing commissions, save that they have greater authority. Let such as are to inform councils out of their particular professions (as lawyers, seamen, mintmen, and the like), be first heard before committees; and then, as occasion serves, before the council; and let them not come in multitudes, or in a tribunitious * manner; for that is to clamor councils, not to inform them. A long table and a square table, or seats about the walls, seem things of form, but are things of substance; for at a long table a few at the upper end, in effect, sway all the business; but in the other form there is more use of the counsellors' opinions that sit lower. A king, when he presides in council, let him beware how he opens his own inclination too much in that which he propoundeth; for else counsellors will but take the wind of him, and instead of giving free counsel, will sing him a song of "placebo." †

XXI.—OF DELAYS.

FORTUNE is like the market, where many times, if you can stay a little, the price will fall; and again, it is sometimes like Sibylla's offer,‡ which at first offereth the commodity at full, then consumeth part and part,

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* A tribunitial or declamatory manner.

† "I'll follow the bent of your humor."

‡ See the history of Rome under the reign of Tarquinius Superbus.

and still holdeth up the price; for occasion (as it is in the common verse) "turneth a bald noddle* after she hath presented her locks in front, and no hold taken;" or, at least, turneth the handle of the bottle first to be received, and after the belly, which is hard to clasp. There is surely no greater wisdom than well to time the beginnings and onsets of things. Dangers are no more light, if they once seem light; and more dangers have deceived men than forced them: nay, it is better to meet some dangers half-way, though they come nothing near, than to keep too long a watch upon approaches; for if a man watch too long, it is odds that he will fall asleep. On the other side, to be deceived with too long shadows (as some have been when the moon was low, and shone on their enemies' back), and so to shoot off before the time; or to teach dangers to come on by over early buckling towards them, is another extreme. The ripeness or unripeness of the occasion (as we said) must be very well weighed; and generally it is good to commit the beginnings of all great actions to Argus with his hundred eyes, and the ends to Briareus with his hundred hands; first to watch and then to speed; for the helmet of Pluto, which maketh the politic man go invisible, is secrecy in the council, and celerity in the execution; for when things are once come to the execution, there is no secrecy comparable to celerity; like the motion of a bullet in the air, which flieth so swift as it outruns the eye.

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* Bald head. He alludes to the common saying "take time by the forelock."

XXII.—OF CUNNING.

We take cunning for a sinister, or crooked wisdom; and certainly there is great difference between a cunning man and a wise men, not only in point of honesty, but in point of ability. There be that can pack the cards,* and yet cannot play well; so there are some that are good in canvasses and factions, that are otherwise weak men. Again, it is one thing to understand persons, and another thing to understand matters; for many are perfect in men's humors that are not capable of the real part of business, which is the constitution of one that hath studied men more than books. Such men are fitter for practice than for counsel, and they are good but in their own alley: turn them to new men, and they have lost their aim; so as the old rule, to know a fool from a wise man "Mitte ambos nudos ad ignotos, et videbis,"† doth scarce hold for them; and, because these cunning men are like haberdashers‡ of small wares, it is not amiss to set forth their shop.

It is a point of cunning to wait upon§ him with whom you speak with your eye, as the Jesuits gave it

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* Packing the cards is an admirable illustration of the author's meaning. It is a cheating exploit, by which knaves, who perhaps are inferior players, insure to themselves the certainty of good hands.

† "Send them both naked among strangers, and *then* you will see."

‡ This word is used here in its primitive sense of "retail dealers." It is said to have been derived from a custom of the Flemings, who first settled in this country in the fourteenth century, stopping the passengers as they passed their shops, and saying to them, "Haber da, herr?" "Will you take this, sir." The word is now generally used as synonymous with linen-draper.

§ To watch.

in precept; for there be many wise men that have secret hearts and transparent countenances: yet this would be done with a demure debasing of your eye sometimes, as the Jesuits also do use.

Another is, when you have anything to obtain of present dispatch, you entertain and amuse the party with whom you deal with some other discourse, that he be not too much awake to make objections. I knew a counsellor and secretary that never came to Queen Elizabeth of England with bills to sign, but would always first put her into some discourse of estate * that she might the less mind the bills.

The like surprise may be made by moving things † when the party is in haste, and cannot stay to consider advisedly of that is moved.

If a man would cross a business that he doubts some other would handsomely and effectually move, let him pretend to wish it well, and move it himself, in such sort as may foil it.

The breaking off in the midst of that one was about to say, as if he took himself up, breeds a greater appetite in him with whom you confer to know more.

And because it works better when anything seemeth to be gotten from you by question than if you offer it of yourself, you may lay a bait for a question, by showing another visage and countenance than you are wont; to the end, to give occasion for the party to ask what the matter is of the change, as Nehemiah‡ did, "And I had not before that time been sad before the king."

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* State. † Discussing matters.

‡ He refers to the occasion when Nehemiah, on presenting the wine, as cupbearer to King Artaxerxes, appeared sorrowful, and on being asked the reason of it, entreated the king to allow Jerusalem to be rebuilt. Nehemiah ii. 1.

In things that are tender and unpleasing, it is good to break the ice by some whose words are of less weight, and to reserve the more weighty voice to come in as by chance, so that he may be asked the question upon the other's speech; as Narcissus did, in relating to Claudius the marriage * of Messalina and Silius.

In things that a man would not be seen in himself, it is a point of cunning to borrow the name of the world; as to say, "The world says," or "There is a speech abroad."

I knew one, that when he wrote a letter, he would put that which was most material in the postscript, as if it had been a by-matter.

I knew another, that when he came to have speech,† he would pass over that that he intended most: and go forth and come back again, and speak of it as of a thing that he had almost forgot.

Some procure themselves to be surprised at such times as it is like the party that they work upon will suddenly come upon them, and to be found with a letter in their hand, or doing somewhat which they are not accustomed, to the end they may be opposed of ‡ those things which of themselves they are desirous to utter.

It is a point of cunning to let fall those words in a man's own name, which he would have another man learn and use, and thereupon take advantage. I knew two that were competitors for the secretary's place, in

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* This can hardly be called a marriage, as at the time of the intrigue Messalina was the wife of Claudius: but she forced Caius Silius, of whom she was deeply enamored, to divorce his own wife, that she herself might enjoy his society. The intrigue was disclosed to Claudius by Narcissus, who was his freedman, and the pander to his infamous vices, on which Silius was put to death.

† To speak in his turn. ‡ Be questioned upon.

Queen Elizabeth's time, and yet kept good quarter * between themselves, and would confer one with another upon the business; and the one of them said, that to be a secretary in the declination of a monarchy was a ticklish thing, and that he did not affect it: † the other straight caught up those words, and discoursed with divers of his friends, that he had no reason to desire to be secretary in the declination of a monarchy. The first man took hold of it, and found means it was told the queen; who, hearing of a declination of a monarchy, took it so ill, as she would never after hear of the other's suit.

There is a cunning, which we in England call "the turning of the cat in the pan;" which is, when that which a man says to another, he lays it as if another had said it to him; and, to say truth, it is not easy, when such a matter passed between two, to make it appear from which of them it first moved and began.

It is a way that some men have, to glance and dart at others by justifying themselves by negatives; as to say, "This I do not;" as Tigellinus did towards Burrhus, "Se non diversas spes sed incolumitatem imperatoris simpliciter spectare." ‡

Some have in readiness so many tales and stories, as there is nothing they would insinuate, but they can wrap it into a tale; § which serveth both to keep them-

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* Kept on good terms.

† Desire it.

‡ "That he did not have various hopes in view, but solely the safety of the emperor." Tigellinus was the profligate minister of Nero, and Africanus Burrhus was the chief of the Prætorian guards.

§ As Nathan did when he reproved David for his criminality with Bathsheba. II. Samuel xii.

selves more in guard, and to make others carry it with more pleasure.

It is a good point of cunning for a man to shape the answer he would have in his own words and propositions; for it makes the other party stick the less.

It is strange how long some men will lie in wait to speak somewhat they desire to say; and how far about they will fetch,* and how many other matters they will beat over to come near it: it is a thing of great patience, but yet of much use.

A sudden, bold, and unexpected question doth many times surprise a man, and lay him open. Like to him, that, having changed his name, and walking in Paul's,† another suddenly came behind him and called him by his true name, whereat straightways he looked back.

But these small wares and petty points of cunning are infinite, and it were a good deed to make a list of them; for that nothing doth more hurt in a state than that cunning men pass for wise.

But certainly some there are that know the resorts‡ and falls§ of business that cannot sink into the main of it;‖ like a house that hath convenient stairs and entries, but never a fair room; therefore you shall see them find out pretty losses¶ in the conclusion, but are noways able to examine or debate matters; and yet commonly they take advantage of their inability, and would be thought wits of direction. Some build rather upon the abusing of others, and (as we now say) putting tricks

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* Use indirect stratagems.

† He alludes to the old Cathedral of St. Paul in London, which, in the sixteenth century, was a common lounge for idlers.

‡ Movements, or springs. § Chances, or vicissitudes.

‖ Enter deeply into.

¶ Faults, or weak points.

upon them, than upon soundness of their own proceedings: but Solomon saith, "Prudens advertit ad gressus suos: stultus divertit ad dolos."*

XXIII.—OF WISDOM FOR A MAN'S SELF.

An ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd † thing in an orchard or garden: and certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste the public. Divide with reason between self-love and society; and be so true to thyself as thou be not false to others, especially to thy king and country. It is a poor centre of a man's actions, himself. It is right earth; for that only stands fast upon his own center;‡ whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens, move upon the centre of another, which they benefit. The referring of all to a man's self, is more tolerable in a sovereign prince, because themselves are not only themselves, but their good and evil is at the peril of the public fortune; but it is a desperate evil in a servant to a prince, or a citizen in a republic; for whatsoever affairs pass such a man's hands, he crooketh them to his own ends, which must needs be often eccentric to the ends of his master or state; therefore let princes or states choose such servants as have not this mark; except they mean their service should be made the accessory. That which maketh the effect more pernicious is, that all proportion is lost; it

* "The wise man gives heed to his own footsteps; the fool turneth aside to the snare." No doubt he here alludes to Ecclesiastes xiv. 2, which passage is thus rendered in our version: "The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness."

† Mischievous.

‡ It must be remembered that Bacon was not a favorer of the Copernican system.

were disproportionate enough for the servant's good to be preferred before the master's; but yet it is a greater extreme, when a little good of the servant shall carry things against a great good of the master's: and yet that is the case of bad officers, treasurers, ambassadors, generals, and other false and corrupt servants; which set a bias upon their bowl, of their own petty ends and envies, to the overthrow of their master's great and important affairs, and, for the most part, the good such servants receive is after the model of their own fortune; but the hurt they sell for that good is after the model of their master's fortune; and certainly it is the nature of extreme self-lovers, as they will set a house on fire, an it were but to roast their eggs; and yet these men many times hold credit with their masters because their study is but to please them, and profit themselves; and for either respect they will abondon the good of their affairs.

Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, a depraved thing: it is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house somewhat before it fall: it is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger who digged and made room for him: it is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted, is, that those which (as Cicero says of Pompey) are, "sui amantes, sine rivali," * are many times unfortunate; and whereas they have all their times sacrificed to themselves, they become in the end themselves sacrifices to the inconstancy of fortune, whose wings they thought by their self-wisdom to have pinioned.

* "Lovers of themselves without a rival."

XXIV.—OF INNOVATIONS.

As the births of living creatures at first are ill-shapen, so are all innovations, which are the births of time; yet notwithstanding, as those that first bring honor into their family are commonly more worthy than most that succeed, so the first precedent (if it be good) is seldom attained by imitation; for ill to man's nature as it stands perverted, hath a natural motion strongest in continuance; but good, as a forced motion, strongest at first. Surely every medicine * is an innovation, and he that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils; for time is the greatest innovator; and if time of course alter things to the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end? It is true, that what is settled by custom, though it be not good, yet at least it is fit; and those things which have long gone together, are, as it were, confederate within themselves;† whereas new things piece not so well; but, though they help by their utility, yet they trouble by their inconformity: besides, they are like strangers, more admired and less favored. All this is true, if time stood still: which, contrariwise, moveth so round, that a froward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as an innovation; and they that reverence too much old times are but a scorn to the new. It were good, therefore, that men in their innovations would follow the example of time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived; for otherwise, whatsoever is new is unlooked for; and ever it mends some and pairs ‡ other; and he that is holpen,

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* Remedy. † Adapted to each other.
‡ Injures, or impairs.

takes it for a fortune, and thanks the time; and he that is hurt, for a wrong, and imputeth it to the author. It is good also not to try experiments in states, except the necessity be urgent, or the utility evident; and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation; and lastly, that the novelty, though it be not rejected, yet be held for a suspect,* and, as the Scripture saith, "That we make a stand upon the ancient way, and then look about us, and discover what is the straight and right way, and so to walk in it." †

XXV.—OF DISPATCH.

AFFECTED dispatch is one of the most dangerous things to business that can be: it is like that which the physicians call predigestion, or hasty digestion, which is sure to fill the body full of crudities, and secret seeds of diseases: therefore measure not dispatch by the times of sitting, but by the advancement of the business: and, as in races, it is not the large stride, or high lift, that makes the speed; so in business, the keeping close to the matter, and not taking of it too much at once, procureth dispatch. It is the care of some, only to come off speedily for the time, or to contrive some false periods of business, because they may seem men of dispatch: but it is one thing to abbreviate by contracting,‡ another by cutting off; and business so handled at sev-

* A thing suspected.

† He probably alludes to Jeremiah, vi. 16: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

‡ That is, by means of good management.

eral sittings, or meetings, goeth commonly backward and forward in an unsteady manner. I knew a wise man * that had it for a by-word, when he saw men hasten to a conclusion, "Stay a little, that we may make an end the sooner."

On the other side, true dispatch is a rich thing; for time is the measure of business, as money is of wares; and business is bought at a dear hand where there is small dispatch. The Spartans and Spaniards have been noted to be of small dispatch: "Mi venga la muerte de Spagna;"—"Let my death come from Spain;" for then it will be sure to be long in coming.

Give good hearing to those that give the first information in business, and rather direct them in the beginning, than interrupt them in the continuance of their speeches; for he that is put out of his own order will go forward and backward, and be more tedious while he waits upon his memory, than he could have been if he had gone on in his own course; but sometimes it is seen that the moderator is more troublesome than the actor.

Iterations are commonly loss of time; but there is no such gain of time as to iterate often the state of the question; for it chaseth away many a frivolous speech as it is coming forth. Long and curious speeches are as fit for dispatch as a robe, or mantle, with a long train, is for a race. Prefaces, and passages,† and excusations,‡ and other speeches of reference to the person, are great wastes of time; and though they seem to pro-

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* It is supposed that he here alludes to Sir Amyas Paulet, a very able statesman, and the ambassador of Queen Elizabeth to the court of France.

† Quotations.

‡ Apologies.

ceed of modesty, they are bravery.* Yet beware of being too material when there is any impediment, or obstruction in men's wills; for preoccupation of mind † ever requireth preface of speech, like a fomentation to make the unguent enter.

Above all things, order and distribution, and singling out of parts, is the life of dispatch; so as the distribution be not too subtile: for he that doth not divide will never enter well into business; and he that divideth too much will never come out of it clearly. To choose time is to save time; and an unseasonable motion is but beating the air. There be three parts of business: the preparation; the debate, or examination; and the perfection. Whereof, if you look for dispatch, let the middle only be the work of many, and the first and last the work of few. The proceeding, upon somewhat conceived in writing, doth for the most part facilitate dispatch; for though it should be wholly rejected, yet that negative is more pregnant of direction than an indefinite, as ashes are more generative than dust.

XXVI.—OF SEEMING WISE.

It hath been an opinion, that the French are wiser than they seem, and the Spaniards seem wiser than they are; but howsoever it be between nations, certainly, it is so between man and man; for as the apostle saith of godliness, "Having a show of godliness, but denying the power thereof;" ‡ so certainly there are, in points of wisdom and sufficiency, that do nothing, or little very solemnly; "magno conatu nugas." § It is a ridiculous thing, and fit for a satire to persons of judgment, to see

* Boasting. † Prejudice. ‡ II. Tim. iii. 5.
§ "Trifles with great effort."

what shifts these formalists have, and what prospectives to make superfices to seem body, that hath depth and bulk. Some are so close and reserved as they will not show their wares but by a dark light, and seem always to keep back somewhat; and when they know within themselves they speak of that they do not well know, would nevertheless seem to others to know of that which they may not well speak. Some help themselves with countenance and gesture, and are wise by signs; as Cicero saith of Piso, that when he answered him he fetched one of his brows up to his forehead, and bent the other down to his chin; "Respondes, altero ad frontem sublato, altero ad mentum depresso supercilio; crudelitatem tibi non placere."* Some think to bear it by speaking a great word, and being peremptory; and go on, and take by admittance that which they cannot make good. Some, whatsoever is beyond their reach, will seem to despise, or make light of it as impertinent or curious: and so would have their ignorance seem judgment. Some are never without a difference, and commonly by amusing men with a subtilty, blanch the matter; of whom A. Gellius saith, "Hominem delirum, qui verborum minutiis rerum frangit pondera."† Of which kind also Plato, in his Protagoras, bringeth in Prodicus in scorn, and maketh him make a speech that consisteth of distinctions from the beginning to the end. Generally such men, in all deliberations, find ease to be‡ of

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* "With one brow raised to your forehead, the other bent downward to your chin, you answer that cruelty delights you not."

† "A foolish man who fritters away the weight of matters by fine-spun trifling on words."

‡ Find it easier to make difficulties and objections than to originate.

the negative side, and affect a credit to object and foretell difficulties; for when propositions are denied, there is an end of them; but if they be allowed, it requireth a new work: which false point of wisdom is the bane of business. To conclude, there is no decaying merchant, or inward beggar,* hath so many tricks to uphold the credit of wealth as these empty persons have to maintain the credit of their sufficiency. Seeming wise men may make shift to get opinion; but let no man choose them for employment; for certainly, you were better take for business a man somewhat absurd than overformal.

XXVII.—OF FRIENDSHIP.

It had been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in few words than in that speech, "Whosoever is delighted in solitude, is either a wild beast or a god:"† for it is most true, that a natural and secret hatred and aversion towards society in any man hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature, except it proceed, not out of a desire in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation: such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen; as Epimenides,‡ the Candian; Numa, the

* One in really insolvent circumstances, though to the world he does not appear so.

† He here quotes from a passage in the "*Politica*" of Aristotle, book i.:

"He who is unable to mingle in society, or who requires nothing, by reason of sufficing for himself, is no part of the state, so that he is either a wild beast or a Divinity."

‡ Epimenides, a poet of Crete (of which Candia is the modern name), is said by Pliny to have fallen into a sleep which lasted

Roman; Empedocles, the Sicilian; and Apollonius of Tyana; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the Church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth; for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little, "Magna civitas, magna solitudo;"* because in a great town friends are scattered, so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighborhoods; but we may go further, and affirm most truly, that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness; and even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the

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fifty-seven years. He was also said to have lived 299 years. Numa pretended that he was instructed in the art of legislation by the divine nymph, Egeria, who dwelt in the Arican grove. Empedocles, the Sicilian philosopher, declared himself to be immortal, and to be able to cure all evils: he is said by some to have retired from society that his death might not be known, and to have thrown himself into the crater of Mount Ætna. Apollonius of Tyana, the Pythagorean philosopher, pretended to miraculous powers, and after his death a temple was erected to him at that place. His life is recorded by Philostratus; and some persons, among whom are Hierocles, Dr. More, in his Mystery of Godliness, and recently Strauss, have not hesitated to compare his miracles with those of our Saviour.

* "A great city, a great desert."

mind; you may take sarza * to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flower of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum † for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak: so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness: for princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions, and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favorites, or privadoes, as if it were matter of grace, or conversation; but the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them "participes curarum;" ‡ for it is that which tieth the knot: and we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned, who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey

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* Sarsaparilla.

† A liquid matter of a pungent smell, extracted from a portion of the body of the beaver.

‡ "Partakers of cares."

(after surnamed the Great) to that height that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's overmatch; for when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his, against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting. With Julius Cæsar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew; and this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death: for when Cæsar would have discharged the senate, in regard of some ill presages, and specially a dream of Calphurnia, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream; and it seemeth his favor was so great, as Antonius, in a letter which is recited verbatim in one of Cicero's Philippics, calleth him "venefica,"—"witch;" as if he had enchanted Cæsar. Augustus raised Agrippa (though of mean birth) to that height, as, when he consulted with Mæcenas about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Mæcenas took the liberty to tell him, that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa, or take away his life: there was no third way, he had made him so great. With Tiberius Cæsar, Sejanus had ascended to that height, as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius, in a letter to him, saith, "Hæc pro amicitia nostra non occultavi,"* and the whole senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship

* "These things, by reason of our friendship, I have not concealed *from you*."

between them two. The like, or more, was between Septimius Severus and Plautianus; for he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus, and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also, in a letter to the senate, by these words: "I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live me." Now, if these princes had been as a Trajan, or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise,* of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity (though as great as ever happened to mortal men) but as an half-piece, except they might have a friend to make it entire; and yet, which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus† observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy,‡ namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on, and saith, that towards his latter time that closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding. Surely Comineus might have made the same judgment also, if it had

* Such infamous men as Tiberius and Sejanus hardly deserve this commendation.

† Philip de Comines.

‡ Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, the valiant antagonist of Louis XI. of France. De Comines spent his early years at his court, but afterwards passed into the service of Louis XI. This monarch was notorious for his cruelty, treachery, and dissimulation, and had all the bad qualities of his contemporary, Edward IV. of England, without any of his redeeming virtues.

pleased him, of his second master, Louis the Eleventh, whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true, "Cor ne edito,"—"eat not the heart."* Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts: but one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves; for there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is, in truth, of operation upon a man's mind of like virtue as the alchymists used to attribute to their stone for man's body, that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature: but yet, without praying in aid of alchymists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature; for, in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action: and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression; and even so is it of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections; for friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections from storm and tempests, but it maketh day-

* Pythagoras went still further than this, as he forbade his disciples to eat flesh of any kind whatever. See the interesting speech which Ovid attributes to him in the Fifteenth book of the Metamorphoses. Sir Thomas Browne, in his Pseudodoxia (Browne's Works, Bohn's Antiquarian edn., vol. i. p. 27, et seq.), gives some curious explanations of the doctrines of this philosopher.

light in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts: neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is, that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the king of Persia, "That speech was like cloth of Arras,* opened and put abroad; whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs." Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel (they indeed are best), but even without that a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statue or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar observation: which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus saith well in one of his enigmas, "Dry light is ever the best:" and certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another, is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment; which is

* Tapestry. Speaking hypercritically, Lord Bacon commits an anachronism here, as Arras did not manufacture tapestry till the middle ages.

ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer; for there is no such flatterer as is a man's self, and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts; the one concerning manners, the other concerning business: for the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health, is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine sometimes too piercing and corrosive; reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead; observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case; but the best receipt (best I say to work and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit for want of a friend to tell them of them, to the great damage both of their fame and fortune: for, as St. James saith, they are as men "that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favor."* As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or, that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or, that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four and twenty letters;† or, that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest;‡ and such other fond and high

* James i. 23.

† He alludes to the recommendation which moralists have often given, that a person in anger should go through the alphabet to himself before he allows himself to speak.

‡ In his day the musket was fixed upon a stand, called the "rest," much as the gingals or matchlocks are used in the East at the present day.

imaginations, to think himself all in all: but when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight: and if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man, it is well (that is to say, better, perhaps, than if he asked none at all); but he runneth two dangers; one, that he shall not be faithfully counselled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends which he hath that giveth it: the other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning), and mixed partly of mischief, and partly of remedy; even as if you would call a physician, that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and, therefore, may put you in a way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind, and so cure the disease, and kill the patient: but a friend, that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon the other inconvenience, and therefore, rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead, than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment), followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid, and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship, is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients to say, "that a friend is another him-

self;" for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him; so that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices of life are, as it were, granted to him and his deputy; for he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there, which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself? A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them: a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate, or beg, and a number of the like: but all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms; whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person: but to enumerate these things were endless; I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part, if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

XXVIII.—OF EXPENSE.

Riches are for spending, and spending for honor and good actions; therefore extraordinary expense must be limited by the worth of the occasion; for voluntary undoing may be as well for a man's country as for kingdom of heaven; but ordinary expense ought to be limited by a man's estate, and governed with such

regard, as it be within his compass; and not subject to deceit and abuse of servants; and ordered to the best show, that the bills may be less than the estimation abroad. Certainly, if a man will keep but of even hand, his ordinary expenses ought to be but to the half of his receipts; and if he think to wax rich, but to the third part. It is no baseness for the greatest to descend and look into their own estate. Some forbear it, not upon negligence alone, but doubting to bring themselves into melancholy, in respect they shall find it broken: but wounds cannot be cured without searching. He that cannot look into his own estate at all, had need both choose well those whom he employeth, and change them often; for new are more timorous and less subtle. He that can look into his estate but seldom, it behoveth him to turn all to certainties. A man had need, if he be plentiful in some kind of expense, to be as saving again in some other: as if he be plentiful in diet, to be saving in apparel: if he be plentiful in the hall, to be saving in the stable: and the like. For he that is plentiful in expenses of all kinds will hardly be preserved from decay. In clearing* of a man's estate, he may as well hurt himself in being too sudden, as in letting it run on too long; for hasty selling is commonly as disadvantageable as interest. Besides, he that clears at once will relapse; for finding himself out of straits, he will revert to his customs: but he that cleareth by degrees induceth a habit of frugality, and gaineth as well upon his mind as upon his estate. Certainly, who hath a state to repair, may not despise small things; and, commonly, it is less dishonorable to abridge petty charges than to stoop to petty gettings. A man ought

* From debts and incumbrances.

warily to begin charges, which once begun will continue: but in matters that return not, he may be more magnificent.

XXIX.—OF THE TRUE GREATNESS OF KINGDOMS AND ESTATES.

The speech of Themistocles, the Athenian, which was haughty and arrogant, in taking so much to himself, had been a grave and wise observation and censure, applied at large to others. Desired at a feast to touch a lute, he said, "He could not fiddle, but yet he could make a small town a great city." These words (holpen a little with a metaphor) may express two different abilities in those that deal in business of estate; for if a true survey be taken of counsellors and statesmen, there may be found (though rarely) those which can make a small state great, and yet cannot fiddle: as, on the other side, there will be found a great many that can fiddle very cunningly, but yet are so far from being able to make a small state great, as there gift lieth the other way; to bring a great and flourishing estate to ruin and decay. And certainly, those degenerate arts and shifts whereby many counsellors and governors gain both favor with their masters and estimation with the vulgar, deserve no better name than fiddling; being things rather pleasing for the time, and graceful to themselves only, than tending to the weal and advancement of the state which they serve. There are also (no doubt) counsellors and governors which may be held sufficient, "negotiis pares," * able to manage affairs, and to keep them from precipices and manifest inconveniences; which, never-

* "Equal to business."

theless, are far from the ability to raise and amplify an estate in power, means, and fortune: but be the workmen what they may be, let us speak of the work; that is, the true greatness of kingdoms and estates, and the means thereof. An argument fit for great and mighty princes to have in their hand; to the end that neither by over-measuring their forces, they lose themselves in vain enterprises: nor, on the other side, by undervaluing them, they descend to fearful and pusillanimous counsels.

The greatness of an estate, in bulk and territory, doth fall under measure; and the greatness of finances and revenues doth fall under computation. The population may appear by musters; and the number and greatness of cities and towns by cards and maps; but yet there is not anything amongst civil affairs more subject to error than the right valuation and true judgment concerning the power and forces of an estate. The kingdom of heaven is compared, not to any great kernel, or nut, but to a grain of mustard-seed;* which is one of the least grains, but hath in it a property and spirit hastily to get up and spread. So are there states great in territory, and yet not apt to enlarge or command; and some that have but a small dimension of stem, and yet apt to be the foundations of great monarchies.

Walled towns, stored arsenals and armories, goodly races of horse, chariots of war, elephants, ordnance, artillery, and the like; all this is but a sheep in a lion's

* He alludes to the following passage, St. Matthew xiii. 31: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

skin, except the breed and disposition of the people be stout and warlike. Nay, number itself in armies importeth not much, where the people is of weak courage; for, as Virgil saith, "It never troubles a wolf how many the sheep be." The army of the Persians in the plains of Arbela was such a vast sea of people, as it did somewhat astonish the commanders in Alexander's army, who came to him, therefore, and wished him to set upon them by night; but he answered, "He will not pilfer the victory: and the defeat was easy. When Tigranes,* the Armenian, being encamped upon a hill with four hundred thousand men, discovered the army of the Romans, being not above fourteen thousand, marching towards him, he made himself merry with it, and said, "Yonder men are too many for an ambassage, and too few for a fight;" but before the sun set, he found them enow to give him the chase with infinite slaughter. Many are the examples of the great odds between number and courage: so that a man may truly make a judgment, that the principal point of greatness in any state is to have a race of military men. Neither is money the sinews of war (as it is trivially said), where the sinews of men's arms in base and effeminate people are failing: for Solon said well to Crœsus (when in ostentation he showed him his gold), "Sir, if any other come that hath better iron than you, he will be master of all this gold." Therefore, let any prince, or state, think soberly of his forces, except his militia of natives be of good and valiant soldiers; and let princes, on the other side, that have subjects of martial disposition, know their own strength, unless they be otherwise

* He was vanquished by Lucullus, and finally submitted to Pompey.

wanting unto themselves. As for mercenary forces (which is the help in this case), all examples show that, whatsoever estate, or prince, doth rest upon them, he may spread his feathers for a time, but he will mew them soon after.

The blessing of Judah and Issachar * will never meet; that the same people, or nation, should be both the lion's whelp and the ass between burdens; neither will it be, that a people overlaid with taxes should ever become valiant and martial. It is true that taxes, levied by consent of the estate, do abate men's courage less; as it hath been seen notably in the excises of the Low Countries; and, in some degree, in the subsidies † of England; for, you must note, that we speak now of the heart, and not of the purse; so that, although the same tribute and tax laid by consent or by imposing, be all one to the purse, yet it works diversely upon the courage. So that you may conclude, that no people overcharged with tribute is fit for empire.

Let states that aim at greatness take heed how their nobility and gentlemen do multiply too fast; for that maketh the common subject grow to be a peasant and base swain, driven out of heart, and in effect but the gentleman's laborer. Even as you may see in coppice woods; if you leave your staddles ‡ too thick, you shall never have clean underwood, but shrubs and

* He alludes to the prophetic words of Jacob on his death-bed, Gen. xlix. 9, 14, 15: "Judah is a lion's whelp——he stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as an old lion——Issachar is a strong ass crouching down between two burdens: And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant: and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute."

† Sums of money voluntarily contributed by the people for the use of the sovereign.

‡ Young trees.

bushes. So in countries, if the gentlemen be too many, the commons will be base; and you will bring it to that, that not the hundred poll will be fit for a helmet: especially as to the infantry, which is the nerve of an army; and so there will be great population and little strength. This which I speak of hath been nowhere better seen than by comparing of England and France; whereof England, though for less in territory and population, hath been (nevertheless) an overmatch; in regard the middle people of England make good soldiers, which the peasants of France do not; and herein the device of King Henry the Seventh (whereof I have spoken largely in the history of his life) was profound and admirable; in making farms and houses of husbandry of a standard; that is, maintained with such a proportion of land unto them as may breed a subject to live in convenient plenty, and no servile condition; and to keep the plough in the hands of the owners, and not mere hirelings; and thus indeed you shall attain to Virgil's character, which he gives to ancient Italy:

"Terra potens armis atque ubere glebæ." *

Neither is that state (which, for anything I know, is almost peculiar to England, and hardly to be found anywhere else, except it be, perhaps, in Poland) to be passed over; I mean the state of free servants and attendants upon noblemen and gentlemen, which are no ways inferior unto the yeomanry for arms; and, therefore, out of all question, the splendor and magnificence, and great retinues, and hospitality of noblemen and gentlemen received into custom, do much conduce unto martial greatness; whereas, contrariwise, the close

* "A land strong in arms and in the richness of the soil."

and reserved living of noblemen and gentlemen causeth a penury of military forces.

By all means it is to be procured that the trunk of Nebuchadnezzar's tree of monarchy * be great enough to bear the branches and the boughs; that is, that the natural subjects of the crown, or state, bear a sufficient proportion to the stronger subjects that they govern; therefore all states that are liberal of naturalization towards strangers are fit for empire; for to think that a handful of people can, with the greatest courage and policy in the world, embrace too large extent of dominion, it may hold for a time, but it will fail suddenly. The Spartans were a nice people in point of naturalization; whereby, while they kept their compass, they stood firm; but when they did spread, and their boughs were becoming too great for their stem, they became a windfall upon the sudden. Never any state was, in this point, so open to receive strangers into their body as were the Romans; therefore it sorted with them accordingly, for they grew to the greatest monarchy. Their manner was to grant naturalization (which they called "jus civitatis"),† and to grant it in the highest degree, that is, not only "jus commercii,‡ jus connubii,§ jus hæreditatis;" ‖ but also, "jus suffragii," ¶ and

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* He alludes to the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, which is mentioned Daniel iv. 10: "I saw, and, behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth; the leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it."

† "Right of citizenship."

‡ "Right of trading."

§ "Right of intermarriage."

‖ "Right of inheritance."

¶ "Right of suffrage."

"jus honorum;" * and this not to singular persons alone, but likewise to whole families; yea, to cities, and sometimes to nations. Add to this their custom of plantation of colonies, whereby the Roman plant was removed into the soil of other nations, and, putting both constitutions together, you will say, that it was not the Romans that spread upon the world, but it was the world that spread upon the Romans; and that was the sure way of greatness. I have marvelled sometimes at Spain, how they clasp and contain so large dominions with so few natural Spaniards; † but sure the whole compass of Spain is a very great body of a tree, far above Rome and Sparta at the first; and, besides, though they have not had that usage to naturalize liberally, yet they have that which is next to it; that is, to employ, almost indifferently, all nations in their militia of ordinary soldiers; yea, and sometimes in their highest commands; nay, it seemeth at this instant they are sensible of this want of natives; as by the pragmatical sanction,‡ now published, appeareth.

It is certain, that sedentary and within-door arts, and delicate manufacturers (that require rather the finger than the arm), have in their nature a contrariety to a military disposition; and generally all warlike people are a little idle, and love danger better than travail; neither must they be too much broken of it, if they shall be preserved in vigor; therefore it was great ad-

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* "Right of honors."

† Long since the time of Lord Bacon, as soon as these colonies had arrived at a certain state of maturity, they at different periods revolted from the mother country.

‡ The laws and ordinances promulgated by the sovereigns of Spain were so called. The term was derived from the Byzantine empire.

vantage in the ancient states of Sparta, Athens, Rome, and others, that they had the use of slaves, which commonly did rid those manufacturers; but that is abolished, in greatest part by the Christian law. That which cometh nearest to it is, to leave those arts chiefly to strangers (which, for that purpose, are the more easily to be received), and to contain the principal bulk of the vulgar natives within those three kinds, tillers of the ground, free servants, and handicraftsmen of strong and manly arts; as smiths, masons, carpenters, etc., not reckoning professed soldiers.

But, above all, for empire and greatness, it importeth most, that a nation do profess arms as their principal honor, study, and occupation; for the things which we formerly have spoken of are but habilitations * towards arms; and what is habilitation without intention and act? Romulus, after his death (as they report or feign), sent a present to the Romans, that above all they should intend † arms, and then they should prove the greatest empire of the world. The fabric of the state of Sparta was wholly (though not wisely) framed and composed to that scope and end; the Persians and Macedonians had it for a flash; ‡ the Gauls, Germans, Goths, Saxons, Normans, and others, had it for a time: the Turks have it at this day, though in great declination. Of Christian Europe, they that have it are in effect only the Spaniards: but it is so plain, that every man profiteth in that he most intendeth, that it needeth not to be stood upon: it is enough to point at it; that no nation which doth not directly profess arms, may look to have greatness fall into their mouths; and, on the other side,

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* Qualifications. † Attend to.

‡ For a short or transitory period.

it is a most certain oracle of time, that those states that continue long in that profession (as the Romans and Turks principally have done) do wonders; and those that have professed arms but for an age have, notwithstanding, commonly attained that greatness in that age which maintained them long after, when their profession and exercise of arms had grown to decay.

Incident to this point is, for a state to have those laws or customs which may reach forth unto them just occasions (as may be pretended) of war; for there is that justice imprinted in the nature of men, that they enter not upon wars (whereof so many calamities do ensue), but upon some, at the least specious grounds and quarrels. The Turk hath at hand, for cause of war, the propagation of his law or sect, a quarrel that he may always command. The Romans, though they esteemed the extending the limits of their empire to be great honor to their generals when it was done, yet they never rested upon that alone to begin a war: first, therefore, let nations that pretend to greatness have this, that they be sensible of wrongs, either upon borderers, merchants, or politic ministers; and that they sit not too long upon a provocation: secondly, let them be pressed * and ready to give aids and succors to their confederates; as it ever was with the Romans; insomuch, as if the confederate had leagues defensive with divers other states, and, upon invasion offered, did implore their aids severally, yet the Romans would ever be the foremost, and leave it to none other to have the honor. As for the wars, which were anciently made on the behalf of a kind of party or tacit conformity of estate, I do not see how they may be well justified: as when the Romans

* Be in a hurry.

made a war for the liberty of Græcia: or, when the Lacedæmonians and Athenians made wars to set up or pull down democracies and oligarchies: or when wars were made by foreigners, under the pretence of justice or protection, to deliver the subjects of others from tyranny and oppression; and the like. Let it suffice, that no estate expect to be great, that is not awake upon any just occasion of arming.

No body can be healthful without exercise, neither natural body nor politic; and, certainly, to a kingdom or estate, a just and honorable war is the true exercise. A civil war, indeed, is like the heat of a fever; but a foreign war is like the heat of exercise, and serveth to keep the body in health; for in a slothful peace, both courages will effeminate and manners corrupt: but howsoever it be for happiness, without all question for greatness, it maketh to be still for the most part in arms: and the strength of a veteran army (though it be a chargeable business), always on foot, is that which commonly giveth the law, or at least, the reputation amongst all neighbor states, as may well be seen in Spain,* which hath had, in one part or other, a veteran army almost continually, now by the space of six-score years.

To be master of the sea is an abridgment of a monarchy. Cicero, writing to Atticus, of Pompey's preparation against Cæsar, saith, "Consilium Pompeii plane Themistocleum est; putat enim, qui mari potitur, eum rerum potiri;" † and without doubt, Pompey had tired out Cæsar, if upon vain confidence

* It was its immense armaments that in a great measure consumed the vitals of Spain.

† "Pompey's plan is clearly that of Themistocles; for he believes that whoever is master of the sea will obtain the supreme power."

he had not left that way. We see the great effects of battles by sea: the battle of Actium decided the empire of the world; the battle of Lepanto arrested the greatness of the Turk. There be many examples where sea-fights have been final to the war: but this is when princes, or states, have set up their rest upon the battles. But thus much is certain; that he that commands the sea is at great liberty, and may take as much and as little of the war as he will; whereas those that be strongest by land are many times, nevertheless, in great straits. Surely, at this day, with us of Europe the vantage of strength at sea (which is one of the principal doweries of this kingdom of Great Britain) is great; both because most of the kingdoms of Europe are not merely inland, but girt with the sea most part of their compass; and because the wealth of both Indies seems, in great part, but an accessory to the command of the seas.

The wars of latter ages seem to be made in the dark, in respect of the glory and honor which reflected upon men from the wars in ancient time. There be now, for martial encouragement, some degrees and orders of chivalry, which, nevertheless, are conferred promiscuously upon soldiers and no soldiers; and some remembrance perhaps upon the escutcheon, and some hospitals for maimed soldiers, and such like things; but in ancient times, the trophies erected upon the place of the victory; the funeral laudatives* and monuments for those that died in the wars; the crowns and garlands personal; the style of emperor with the great kings of the world after borrowed; the triumphs of the generals upon their return; the great donatives and

* Encomiums.

largesses upon the disbanding of the armies, were things able to inflame all men's courages; but above all, that of the triumph amongst the Romans was not pageants, or gaudery, but one of the wisest and noblest institutions that ever was: for it contained three things; honor to the general, riches to the treasury out of the spoils, and donatives to the army: but that honor, perhaps, were not fit for monarchies, except it be in the person of the monarch himself, or his sons; as it came to pass in the times of the Roman emperors, who did impropriate the actual triumphs to themselves and their sons, for such wars as they did achieve in person, and left only for wars achieved by subjects, some triumphal garments and ensigns to the general.

To conclude: no man can by care taking (as the Scripture saith), "add a cubit to his stature," * in this little model of a man's body; but in the great frame of kingdoms and commonwealths, it is in the power of princes, or estates, to add amplitude and greatness to their kingdoms; for by introducing such ordinances, constitutions, and customs, as we have now touched, they may sow greatness to their posterity and succession: but these things are commonly not observed, but left to take their chance.

XXX.—OF REGIMEN OF HEALTH.

THERE is a wisdom in this beyond the rules of physic: a man's own observation, what he finds good of, and what he finds hurt of, is the best physic to preserve health; but it is a safer conclusion to say, "This agreeth not well with me, therefore I will not continue

* St. Matthew vi. 27; St. Luke xii. 25.

it;" than this, "I find no offence of this, therefore I may use it:" for strength of nature in youth passeth over many excesses which are owing* a man till his age. Discern of the coming on of years, and think not to do the same things still; for age will not be defied. Beware of sudden change in any great point of diet, and, if necessity enforce it, fit the rest to it; for it is a secret both in nature and state, that it is safer to change many things than one. Examine thy customs of diet, sleep, exercise, apparel, and the like; and try, in anything thou shalt judge hurtful to discontinue it by little and little; but so, as if thou dost find any inconvenience by the change, thou come back to it again: for it is hard to distinguish that which is generally held good and wholesome from that which is good particularly,† and fit for thine own body. To be free-minded and cheerfully disposed at hours of meat, and of sleep, and of exercise, is one of the best precepts of long lasting. As for the passions and studies of the mind, avoid envy, anxious fears, anger fretting inwards, subtle and knotty inquisitions, joys, and exhilarations in excess, sadness not communicated. Entertain hopes, mirth rather than joy, variety of delights, rather than surfeit of them; wonder and admiration, and therefore novelties; studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects; as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature. If you fly physic in health altogether, it will be too strange for your body when you shall need it; if you make it too familiar, it will work no extraordinary effect when sickness cometh. I command rather some diet, for certain seasons, than frequent use of physic,

* The effects of which must be felt in old age.
† Of benefit in your individual case.

except it be grown into a custom; for those diets alter the body more, and trouble it less. Despise no new accident* in your body, but ask opinion† of it. In sickness, respect health principally; and in health, action: for those that put their bodies to endure in health, may, in most sicknesses which are not very sharp, be cured only with diet and tendering. Celsus could never have spoken it as a physician, had he not been a wise man withal, when he giveth it for one of the great precepts of health and lasting, that a man do vary and interchange contraries, but with an inclination to the more benign extreme: use fasting and full eating, but rather full eating;‡ watching and sleep, but rather sleep; sitting and exercise, but rather exercise, and the like: so shall nature be cherished, and yet taught masteries. Physicians are some of them so pleasing and comformable to the humor of the patient, as they press not the true cure of the disease; and some other are so regular in proceeding according to art not for the disease, as they respect not sufficiently the condition of the patient. Take one of a middle temper; or, if it may not be found in one man, combine two of either sort; and forget not to call as well the best acquainted with your body, as the best reputed of for his faculty.

XXXI.—OF SUSPICION.

Suspicions amongst thoughts are like bats amongst birds, they ever fly by twilight: certainly they are to be repressed, or at the least well guarded; for they cloud

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* Any striking change in the constitution.

† Take medical advice.

‡ Incline rather to fully satisfying your hunger.

the mind, they lose friends, and they check with business, whereby business cannot go on currently and constantly: they dispose kings to tyranny, husbands to jealousy, wise men to irresolution and melancholy: they are defects, not in the heart, but in the brain; for they take place in the stoutest natures, as in the example of Henry VII. of England; there was not a more suspicious man nor a more stout: and in such a composition they do small hurt; for commonly they are not admitted, but with examination, whether they be likely or no; but in fearful natures they gain ground too fast. There is nothing makes a man suspect much more than to know little; and therefore men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more, and not to keep their suspicions in smother. What would men have? Do they think those they employ and deal with are saints? Do they not think they will have their own ends, and be truer to themselves than to them? Therefore there is no better way to moderate suspicions, than to account upon such suspicions as true, and yet to bridle them as false:* for so far a man ought to make use of suspicions, as to provide, as if that should be true that he suspects, yet it may do him no hurt. Suspicions that the mind of itself gathers are but buzzes; but suspicions that are artificially nourished, and put into men's heads by the tales and whisperings of others, have stings. Certainly, the best mean, to clear the way in this same wood of suspicions, is frankly to communicate them with the party that he suspects; for thereby he shall be sure to know more of the truth of them than he did before; and withal shall make that party more circumspect, not to give further cause of

* To hope the best, but be fully prepared for the worst.

suspicion. But this would not be done to men of base natures; for they, if they find themselves once suspected, will never be true. The Italian says, "Sospetto licentia fede;"* as if suspicion did give a passport to faith; but it ought rather to kindle it to discharge itself.

XXXII.—OF DISCOURSE.

Some in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments,† than of judgment, in discerning what is true; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought. Some have certain common-places and themes, wherein they are good, and want variety; which kind of poverty is for the most part tedious, and, when it is once perceived, ridiculous. The honorablest part of talk is to give the occasion;‡ and again to moderate and pass to somewhat else; for then a man leads the dance. It is good in discourse, and speech of conversation, to vary, and intermingle speech of the present occasion with arguments, tales with reasons, asking of questions with telling of opinions, and jest with earnest; for it is a dull thing to tire, and as we say now, to jade anything too far. As for jest, there be certain things which ought to be privileged from it; namely, religion, matters of state, great persons, any man's present business of importance, and any case that deserveth pity; yet there be some that think their wits have been asleep, except they dart out

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* Suspicion is the passport to faith.

† A censure of this nature has been applied by some to Dr Johnson, and possibly with some reason.

‡ To start the subject.

somewhat that is piquant, and to the quick; that is a vein which would be bridled; *

"Parce, puer, stimulis, et fortius utere loris." †

And generally, men ought to find the difference between saltness and bitterness. Certainly he that hath a satirical vein, as he maketh others afraid of his wit, so he had need be afraid of others' memory. He that questioneth much, shall learn much, and content much; but especially if he apply his questions to the skill of the persons whom he asketh; for he shall give them occasion to please themselves in speaking, and himself shall continually gather knowledge: but let his questions not be troublesome, for that is fit for a poser; ‡ and let him be sure to leave other men their turn to speak: nay if there be any that would reign and take up all the time, let him find means to take them off, and to bring others on, as musicians used to do with those that dance too long galliards. § If you dissemble sometimes your knowledge of that you are thought to know, you shall be thought at another time, to know that you know not. Speech of a man's self ought to be seldom, and well chosen. I knew one was wont to say in scorn, "He must needs be a wise man, he speaks so much of himself," and there is but one case wherein a man may commend himself with good grace and that is in commending virtue in another, especially if it be such a virtue whereunto him-

* Requires to be bridled.

† He quotes here from Ovid: "Boy, spare the whip, and tightly grasp the reins."

‡ One who tests or examines.

§ The Galliard was a light active dance much in fashion in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

self pretendeth. Speech of touch * towards others should be sparingly used; for discourse ought to be as a field, without coming home to any man. I knew two noblemen of the west part of England, whereof the one was given to scoff, but kept ever royal cheer in his house; the one would ask of those who had been at the other's table, "Tell truly, was there never a flout † or dry blow ‡ given? To which the guest would answer, "Such and such a thing passed." The lord would say, "I thought he would mar a good dinner." Discretion of speech is more than eloquence; and to speak agreeably to him with whom we deal, is more than to speak in good words, or in good order. A good continued speech without a good speech of interlocution, shows slowness; and a good reply, or second speech, without a good settled speech, showeth shallowness and weakness. As we see in beasts that those that are weakest in the course, are yet nimblest in the turn; as it is betwixt the greyhound and the hare. To use too many circumstances, ere one come to the matter, is wearisome; to use none at all is blunt.

XXXIII.—OF PLANTATIONS.§

PLANTATIONS are amongst ancient, primitive, and heroical works. When the world was young, it begat more children; but now it is old, it begets fewer, for I may justly account new plantations to be the children of former kingdoms. I like a plantation in a pure soil; that is, where people are not displanted, ‖ to the end to

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* Hits at, or remarks intended to be applied to particular individuals.

† A slight or insult. ‡ A sarcastic remark.

§ The old term for colonies.

‖ He perhaps alludes covertly to the conduct of the Spaniards

plant in others; for else it is rather an extirpation than a plantation. Planting of countries is like planting of woods; for you must make account to lose almost twenty years' profit, and expect your recompense in the end: for the principal thing that hath been the destruction of most plantations, has been the base and hasty drawing of profit in the first years. It is true, speedy profit is not to be neglected, as far as may stand with the good of the plantation, but no farther. It is a shameful and unblessed thing * to take the scum of people and wicked condemned men, to be the people with whom you plant; and not only so, but it spoileth the plantation; for they will ever live like rogues, and not fall to work, but be lazy, and do mischief, and spend victuals, and be quickly weary, and then certify over to their country to the discredit of the plantation. The people wherewith you plant ought to be gardeners, ploughmen, laborers, smiths, carpenters, joiners, fisherman, fowlers, with some few apothecaries, surgeons, cooks and bakers. In a country of plantation first look about what kind of victual the country yields of itself to hand: as chestnuts, walnuts, pine-apples, olives, dates, plums, cherries, wild honey, and the like; and make use of them. Then consider what victual, or esculent things there are, which grow speedily, and within the year; as parsnips, carrots, turnips, onions, radish, artichokes of Jerusalem, maize and the like: for wheat, barley, and oats, they ask too much labor; but with peas and beans

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extirpating aboriginal inhabitants of the West India Islands, against which the venerable Las Casas so eloquently but vainly protested.

* Of course this censure would not apply to what is primarily and essentially a convict colony: the object of which is to drain the mother country of its impure superfluities.

you may begin, both because they ask less labor, and because they serve for meat as well as for bread; and of rice likewise cometh a great increase, and it is a kind of meat. Above all, there ought to be brought store of biscuit, oatmeal, flour, meal, and the like, in the beginning, till bread may be had. For beasts, or birds, take chiefly such as are least subject to diseases and multiply fastest; as swine, goats, cocks, hens, turkeys, geese, house-doves, and the like. The victual in plantation ought to be expended almost as in a besieged town; that is with certain allowance: and let the main part of the ground employed to gardens or corn, be to a common stock; and to be laid in, and stored up, and then delivered out in proportion; besides some spots of ground that any particular person will manure for his own private use. Consider, likewise, what commodities the soil where the plantation is doth naturally yield, that they may some way help to defray the charge of the plantation; so it be not, as was said, to the untimely prejudice of the main business, as it hath fared with tobacco in Virginia.* Wood commonly aboundeth but too much; and therefore timber is fit to be one. If there be iron ore, and streams whereupon to set the mills, iron is a brave commodity where wood aboundeth. Making of bay-salt, if the climate be proper for it, would be put in experience: growing silk, likewise, if any be, is a likely commodity: pitch and tar, where store of firs and pines are will not fail; so drugs and sweet woods, where they are, cannot but yield great profit: soap-ashes, likewise, and other things that may be thought of; but moil † not too much under ground, for

* Times have much changed since this was penned: tobacco is now the staple commodity, and the source of "The main business" of Virginia.

† To labor hard.

the hope of mines is very uncertain, and useth to make the planters lazy in other things. For government, let it be in the hands of one, assisted with some counsel; and let them have commission to exercise martial laws, with some limitation; and above all, let men make that profit of being in the wilderness, as they have God always and his service before their eyes: let not the government of the plantation depend upon too many counsellors and undertakers in the country that planteth, but upon a temperate number: and let those be rather noblemen and gentlemen, than merchants; for they look ever to the present gain. Let there be freedoms from custom, till the plantation be of strength: and not only freedom from custom, but freedom to carry their commodities where they make their best of them except there be some special cause of caution. Cram not in people, by sending too fast company after company; but rather hearken how they waste, and send supplies proportionably; but so as the number may live well in the plantation, and not by surcharge be in penury. It hath been a great endangering to the health of some plantations, that they have built along the sea and rivers, in marish * and unwholesome grounds: therefore though you begin there, to avoid carriage and other like discommodities, yet built still rather upwards from the streams, than along. It concerneth likewise the health of the plantation, that they have good store of salt with them, that they may use it in their victuals when it shall be necessary. If you plant where savages are, do not only entertain them with trifles and gingles,† but use them justly and gra-

* Marshy; from the French *marais*, a marsh.

† Gewgaws, or spangles.

ciously, with sufficient guard nevertheless; and do not win their favor by helping them to invade their enemies, but for their defense it is not amiss; and send oft of them over to the country that plants, that they may see a better condition than their own, and commend it when they return. When the plantation grows to strength, then it is time to plant with women as well as with men; that the plantation may spread into generations, and not be ever pieced from without. It is the sinfullest thing in the world to forsake or destitute a plantation once in forwardness; for, besides the dishonor, it is the guiltiness of blood of many commiserable persons.

XXXIV.—OF RICHES.

I CANNOT call riches better than the baggage of virtue; the Roman word is better, "impedimenta;" for as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue; it cannot be spared nor left behind, but it hindereth the march; yea, and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory: of great riches there is no real use, except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit; so saith Solomon, "Where much is, there are many to consume it; and what hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes?"* The personal fruition in any man cannot reach to feel great riches: there is a custody of them; or a power of dole and donative of them; or a fame of them; but no solid use to the owner. Do you not see what feigned prices are set upon little stones and rarities? and what works of ostentation are under-

* He alludes to Ecclesiastes v. 11, the words of which are somewhat varied in our version: "When goods increase, they are increased that eat them; and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?"

taken, because there might seem to be some use of great riches? But then you will say, they may be of use to buy men out of dangers or troubles; as Solomon saith, "Riches are as a strong hold in the imagination of the rich man;"* but this is excellently expressed, that it is in imagination, and not always in fact: for, certainly, great riches have sold more men than they have bought out. Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly; yet have no abstract nor friarly contempt of them; but distinguish, as Cicero saith well of Rabirius Posthumus, "In studio rei amplificandæ apparebat, non avaritiæ prædam, sed instrumentum bonitati quæri."† Hearken also to Solomon, and beware of hasty gathering of riches: "Qui festinat ad divitias, non erit insons."‡ The poets feign, that when Plutus (which is riches) is sent from Jupiter, he limps, and goes slowly; but when he is sent from Pluto, he runs, and is swift of foot; meaning, that riches gotten by good means and just labor pace slowly; but when they come by the death of others § (as by the course of inheritance, testaments, and the like), they come tumbling upon a man: but it might be applied likewise to Pluto, taking him for the devil: for when riches come from the devil (as by fraud and oppression, and unjust means), they

* "The rich man's wealth is his strong city."—Prov. x. 15; xviii. 11.

† "In his anxiety to increase his fortune, it was evident that not the gratification of avarice was sought, but the means of doing good."

‡ "He who hastens to riches will not be without guilt." In our version the words are: "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent."—Proverbs xxviii. 22.

§ Pluto being the king of the Infernal regions, or place of departed spirits.

come upon speed. The ways to enrich are many, and most of them foul: parsimony is one of the best, and yet is not innocent; for it withholdeth men from works of liberality and charity. The improvement of the ground is the most natural obtaining of riches; for it is our great mother's blessing, the earth's; but it is slow; and yet, where men of great wealth do stoop to husbandry, it multiplieth riches exceedingly. I knew a nobleman in England that had the greatest audits* of any man in my time, a great grazer, a great sheep-master, a great timber-man, a great collier, a great corn-master, a great lead-man, and so of iron, and a number of the like points of husbandry; so as the earth seemed a sea to him in respect of the perpetual importation. It was truly observed by one, "That himself came very hardly to a little riches, and very easily to great riches;" for when a man's stock is come to that, that he can expect the prime of markets,† and overcome those bargains, which for their greatness are few men's money, and be partner in the industries of younger men, he cannot but increase mainly. The gains of ordinary trades and vocations are honest, and furthered by two things, chiefly: by diligence, and by a good name for good and fair dealing; but the gains of bargains are of a more doubtful nature, when men shall wait upon others' necessity: broke by servants and instruments to draw them on put off others cunningly that would be better chapmen, and the like practices, which are crafty and naught; as for the chopping of bargains, when a man buys not to hold, but to sell over again, that commonly grindeth double, both upon the seller and upon the buyer. Shar-

* Rent-roll, or account taken of income.

† Wait till prices have risen.

ings do greatly enrich, if the hands be well chosen that are trusted. Usury is the certainest means of gain, though one of the worst; as that whereby a man doth eat his bread, "in sudore vultus alieni;"* and besides, doth plough upon Sundays: but yet certain though it be, it hath flaws; for that the scriveners and brokers do value unsound men to serve their own turn. The fortune, in being the first in an invention, or in a privilege, doth cause sometimes a wonderful overgrowth in riches, as it was with the first sugarman † in the Canaries: therefore if a man can play the true logician, to have as well judgment as invention, he may do great matters, especially if the times be fit: he that resteth upon gains certain, shall hardly grow to great riches; and he that puts all upon adventures, doth oftentimes break and come to poverty: it is good, therefore, to guard adventures with certainties that may uphold losses. Monopolies, and coemption of wares for resale, where they are not restrained, are great means to enrich; especially if the party have intelligence what things are like to come into request, and so, store himself beforehand. Riches gotten by service though it be of the best rise, yet when they are gotten by flattery, feeding humors, and other servile conditions, they may be placed amongst the worst. As for fishing for testaments and executorships (as Tacitus saith of Seneca, "Testamenta et orbos tanquam indagine capi"),‡ it is yet worse, by how much men submit themselves to meaner persons than in ser-

* "In the sweat of another's brow." He alludes to the words of Genesis iii. 19: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

† Planters of sugar-canes.

‡ "Wills and childless persons were caught *by him* as though with a hunting-net."

vice. Believe not much them that seem to despise riches, for they despise them that despair of them; and none worse when they come to them. Be not pennywise; riches have wings, and sometimes they fly away of themselves, sometimes they must be set flying to bring in more. Men leave their riches either to their kindred or to the public; and moderate portions prosper best in both. A great state left to an heir, is as a lure to all the birds of prey round about to seize on him, if he be not the better established in years and judgment: likewise, glorious gifts and foundations are like sacrifices without salt; and but the painted sepulchres of alms, which soon will putrefy and corrupt inwardly: therefore measure not thine advancements by quantity, but frame them by measure: and defer not charities till death; for, certainly, if a man weigh it rightly, he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than of his own.

XXXV.—OF PROPHECIES.

I MEAN not to speak of divine prophecies, nor of heathen oracles, nor of natural predictions; but only of prophecies that have been of certain memory, and from hidden causes. Saith the Pythonissa* to Saul, "To-morrow thou and thy sons shall be with me." Virgil hath these verses from Homer:

> "Hic domus Æneæ cunctis dominabitur oris,
> Et nati natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis."†

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* "Pythoness," used in the sense of witch. He alludes to the witch of Endor, and the words in Samuel xxviii. 19. He is, however, mistaken in attributing these words to the witch; it was the spirit of Samuel that said, "To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me."

† "But the house of Æneas shall reign over every shore, both his children's children, and those who shall spring from them."

A prophecy, as it seems, of the Roman empire. Seneca the tragedian hath these verses:

"————Venient annis
Sæcula seris, quibus Oceanus
Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens
Pateat Tellus, Tiphysque novos
Detegat orbes; nec sit terris
Ultima Thule:" *

a prophecy of the discovery of America. The daughter of Polycrates † dreamed that Jupiter bathed her father, and Apollo anointed him; and it came to pass that he was crucified in an open place, where the sun made his body run with sweat; and the rain washed it. Philip of Macedon dreamed he sealed up his wife's belly; whereby he did expound it, that his wife should be barren; but Aristander the sooth-sayer told him his wife was with child, because men do not use to seal vessels that are empty. A phantasm that appeared to M. Brutus in his tent, said to him, "Philippis iterum me videbis." ‡ Tiberius said to Galba, "Tu quoque, Galba, degustabis imperium." § In Vespasian's time there went a prophecy in the East that those that should come forth of Judea, should reign over the world; which though it may be was meant of our Saviour, yet

* "After the lapse of years, ages will come in which Ocean shall relax his chains around the world, and a vast continent shall appear, and Tiphys shall explore new regions, and Thule shall be no longer the utmost verge of earth."

† He was king of Samos, and was treacherously put to death by Orœtes, the governor of Magnesia, in Asia Minor. His daughter in consequence of her dream, attempted to dissuade him from visiting Orœtes, but in vain.

‡ "Thou shalt see me again at Philippi."

§ "Thou also, Galba, shall taste of empire."

Tacitus expounds it of Vespasian. Domitian dreamed, the night before he was slain, that a golden head was growing out of the nape of his neck; and indeed the succession that followed him, for many years made golden times. Henry the Sixth of England said of Henry the Seventh, when he was a lad, and gave him water, "This is the lad that shall enjoy the crown for which we strive." When I was in France, I heard from one Dr. Pena, that the queen mother,* who was given to curious arts, caused the king her husband's nativity to be calculated under a false name; and the astrologer gave a judgment, that he should be killed in a duel; at which the queen laughed, thinking her husband to be above challenges and duels; but he was slain upon a course at tilt, the splinters of the staff of Montgomery going in at his beaver. The trivial prophecy which I heard when I was a child, and Queen Elizabeth was in the flower of her years, was,

> "When hempe is spunne
> England's done:"

whereby it was generally conceived, that after the princes had reigned which had the principal letters of the word hempe (which were Henry, Edward, Mary, Philip, and Elizabeth), England should come to utter confusion; which thanks be to God, is verified only in the change of the name; for that the king's style is now no more of England, but of Britain.† There was also another prophecy before the year of eighty-eight, which I do not well understand.

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* Catherine de Medicis, the wife of Henry II. of France, who died from a wound accidentally received in a tournament.

† James I. being the first monarch of Great Britain.

"There shall be seen upon a day,
Between the Baugh and the May,
The black fleet of Norway.
When that that is come and gone,
England build houses of lime and stone,
For after wars shall you have none."

It was generally conceived to be meant of the Spanish fleet that came in eighty-eight: for that the king of Spain's surname, as they say, is Norway. The prediction of Regiomontanus,

"Octogesimus octavus mirabilis annus." *

was thought likewise accomplished in the sending of that great fleet, being the greatest in strength, though not in number, of all that ever swam upon the sea. As for Cleon's dream,† I think it was a jest; it was, that he was devoured of a long dragon: and it was expounded of a maker of sausages, that troubled him exceedingly. There are numbers of the like kind; especially if you include dreams, and predictions of astrology: but I have set down these few only of certain credit, for example.

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* "The eighty-eight will be a wondrous year."

† Aristophanes, in his Comedy of The Knights, satirizes Cleon, the Athenian demagogue. He introduces a declaration of the oracle that the Eagle of hides (by whom Cleon was meant, his father having been a tanner) should be conquered by a serpent, which Demosthenes, one of the characters in the play, expounds as meaning a maker of sausages. How Lord Bacon could for a moment doubt that this was a mere jest, it is difficult to conjecture. The following is a literal translation of a portion of the passage from The Knights (l. 197): "But when a leather eagle with crooked talons shall have seized with its jaws a serpent, a stupid creature, a drinker of blood, then the tan pickle of the Paphlagonians is destroyed; but upon the sellers of sausages the Deity bestows great glory, unless they choose rather to sell sausages."

My judgment is that they ought all to be despised, and ought to serve but for winter talk by the fireside: though when I say despised, I mean it as for belief; for otherwise, the spreading or publishing of them is in no sort to be despised, for they have done much mischief; and I see many severe laws made to suppress them. That that hath given them grace, and some credit consisteth in three things. First, that men mark when they hit, and never mark when they miss:* as they do, generally, also of dreams. The second is, that probable conjectures, or obscure traditions, many times turn themselves into prophecies; while the nature of man, which coveteth divination, thinks it no peril to foretell that which indeed they do but collect; as that of Seneca's verse; for so much was then subject to demonstration, that the globe of the earth had great parts beyond the Atlantic, which might be probably conceived not to be all sea: and added thereto the tradition in Plato's Timæmus, and his Atlanticus,† it might encourage one to turn it to a prediction. The third and last (which is the great one) is that almost all of them, being infinite in number, have been impostures, and by idle and crafty brains, merely contrived and feigned, after the event past.

* This is a very just remark. So-called strange coincidences, and wonderful dreams that are verified, when the point is considered, are really not at all marvellous. We never hear of the 999 dreams that are not verified, but the thousandth that happens to precede its fulfillment is blazoned by unthinking people as a marvel. It would be a much more wonderful thing if dreams were not occasionally verified.

† Under this name he alludes to the Critias of Plato, in which an imaginary "terra incognita" is discoursed of under the name of the "New Atlantis." It has been conjectured from this by some, that Plato really did believe in the existence of a continent on the other side of the globe.

XXXVI.—OF AMBITION.

AMBITION is like choler, which is a humor that maketh men active, earnest, full of alacrity, and stirring, if it be not stopped: but if it be stopped, and cannot have its way, it becometh adust,* and thereby malign and venomous: so ambitious men, if they find the way open for their rising, and still get forward, they are rather busy than dangerous; but if they be checked in their desires, they become secretly discontent, and look upon men and matters with an evil eye, and are best pleased when things go backward; which is the worst property in a servant of a prince or state: therefore it is good for princes, if they use ambitious men, to handle it so, as they be still progressive, and not retrograde; which, because it cannot be without inconvenience, it is good not to use such natures at all; for if they rise not with their service, they will take order to make their service fall with them. But since we have said, it were good not to use men of ambitious natures, except it be upon necessity, it is fit we speak in what cases they are of necessity. Good commanders in the wars must be taken, be they never so ambitious; for the use of their service dispenseth with the rest: and to take a soldier without ambition, is to pull off his spurs. There is also great use of ambitious men in being screens to princes in matters of danger and envy; for no man will take that part except he be like a seeled† dove, that mounts and mounts, because he cannot see about him. There is use also of ambitious men in pulling down the greatness of any subject that overtops; as Tiberius used

* Hot and fiery.

† With the eyes closed, or blindfolded.

Macro * in the pulling down of Sejanus. Since, therefore, they must be used in such cases, there resteth to speak how they are to be bridled, that they may be less dangerous. There is less danger of them if they be of mean birth, than if they be noble; and if they be rather harsh of nature, than gracious and popular; and if they be rather new raised, than grown cunning and fortified in their greatness. It is counted by some a weakness in princes to have favorites; but it is, of all others, the best remedy against ambitious great ones; for when the way of pleasuring and displeasuring lieth by the favorite, it is impossible any other should be over great. Another means to curb them, is to balance them by others as proud as they: but then there must be some middle counsellors, to keep things steady; for without that ballast the ship will roll too much. At the least, a prince may animate and inure some meaner persons to be, as it were, scourges to ambitious men. As for the having of them obnoxious to † ruin, if they be of fearful natures, it may do well; but if they be stout and daring, it may precipitate their designs, and prove dangerous. As for the pulling of them down, if the affairs require it, and that it may not be done with safety suddenly, the only way is, the interchange continually of favors and disgraces, whereby they may not know what to expect, and be as it were, in a wood. Of ambitions, it is less harmful the ambition to prevail in great things, than that other to appear in everything; for that breeds confusion, and mars business: but yet, it is less danger to have an ambitious man stir-

* He was a favorite of Tiberius, to whose murder by Nero he was said to have been an accessory. He afterwards prostituted his own wife to Caligula, by whom he was eventually put to death.

† Liable to.

ring in business, than great in dependencies. He that seeketh to be eminent among stable men, hath a great task; but that is ever good for the public; but he that plots to be the only figure among ciphers, is the decay of a whole age. Honor hath three things in it; the vantage ground to do good; the approach to kings and principal persons; and the raising of a man's own fortunes. He that hath the best of these intentions, when he aspireth, is an honest man; and that prince that can discern of these intentions in another that aspireth, is a wise prince. Generally, let princes and states choose such ministers as are more sensible of duty than of rising, and such as love business rather upon conscience than upon bravery; and let them discern a busy nature from a willing mind.

XXXVII.—OF MASQUES AND TRIUMPHS.

These things are but toys to come amongst such serious observations; but yet, since princes will have such things, it is better they should be graced with elegancy, than daubed with cost. Dancing to song, is a thing of great state and pleasure. I understand it that the song be in quire, placed aloof, and accompanied with some broken music; and the ditty fitted to the device. Acting in song, especially in dialogues, hath an extreme good grace; I say acting, not dancing (for that is a mean and vulgar thing); and the voices of the dialogue would be strong and manly (a base and a tenor; no treble), and the ditty high and tragical, not nice or dainty. Several quires placed one over against another, and taking the voice by catches anthem-wise, give great pleasure. Turning dances into figure is a childish curiosity; and generally, let it be noted, that those things

which I here set down are such as do naturally take the sense, and not respect petty wonderments. It is true, the alterations of scenes, so it be quietly and without noise, are things of great beauty and pleasure; for they feed and relieve the eye before it be full of the same object. Let the scenes abound with light, especially colored and varied; and let the masques, or any other that are to come down from the scene, have some motions upon the scenes itself before their coming down; for it draws the eye strangely, and makes it with great pleasure to desire to see that, it cannot perfectly discern. Let the songs be loud and cheerful, and not chirpings or pulings:* let the music likewise be sharp and loud, and well placed. The colors that show best by candlelight, are white, carnation, and a kind of sea-water green, and ouches,† or spangs,‡ as they are of no great cost, so they are of most glory. As for rich embroidery, it is lost, and not discerned. Let the suits of the masquers be graceful, and such as become the person when the vizors are off; not after examples of known attires; Turks, soldiers, mariners, and the like. Let anti-masques§ not be long; they have been commonly of fools, satyrs, baboons, wild men, antics, beasts, sprites, witches, Ethiopes, pigmies, turquets,‖ nymphs, rustics,

* Chirpings like the noise of young birds.

† Jewels or necklaces

‡ Spangles, or O's of gold or silver. Beckmann says that these were invented in the beginning of the seventeenth century. See Beckmann's Hist. of Inventions (Bohn's Stand. Lib.), vol i. p. 424.

§ Or antick-masques; were ridiculous interludes dividing the acts of the more serious masque. These were performed by hired actors, while the masque was played by ladies and gentlemen. The rule was, the characters were to be neither serious nor ridiculous. The "Comus" of Milton is an admirable specimen of a masque.

‖ Turks.

Cupids, statues, moving, and the like. As for angels, it is not comical enough to put them in anti-masques: and anything that is hideous, as devils, giants, is, on the other side, as unfit: but chiefly, let the music of them be recreative, and with some strange changes. Some sweet odors suddenly coming forth, without any drops falling, are, in such a company as there is steam and heat, things of great pleasure and refreshment. Double masques, one of men, another of ladies, addeth state and variety; but all is nothing, except the room be kept clear and neat.

For justs, and tourneys, and barriers, the glories of them are chiefly in the chariots, wherein the challengers make their entry; especially if they be drawn with strange beasts: as lions, bears, camels, and the like; or in the devices of their entrance, or in the bravery of their liveries, or in the goodly furniture of their horses and armor. But enough of these toys.

XXXVIII.—OF NATURE IN MEN.

NATURE is often hidden, sometimes overcome, seldom extinguished. Force maketh nature more violent in the return; doctrine and discourse maketh nature less importune; but custom only doth alter and subdue nature. He that seeketh victory over his nature, let him not set himself too great nor too small tasks: for the first will make him dejected by often failings, and the second will make him a small proceeder, though by often prevailings; and at the first, let him practise with helps, as swimmers do with bladders, or rushes; but, after a time, let him practise with disadvantage, as dancers do with thick shoes; for it breeds great perfection, if the practice be harder than the use. Where na-

ture is mighty, and therefore the victory hard, the degrees had need be, first to stay and arrest nature in time; like to him that would say over the four and twenty letters when he was angry; then to go less in quantity: as if one should, in forbearing wine, come from drinking healths to a draught at a meal; and lastly, to discontinue altogether: but if a man have the fortitude and resolution to enfranchise himself at once, that is the best:

> "Optimus ille animi vindex lædentia pectus
> Vincula qui rupit, dedoluitque semel."*

Neither is the ancient rule amiss, to bend nature as a wand to a contrary extreme, whereby to set it right; understanding it where the contrary extreme is no vice. Let not a man force a habit upon himself with a perpetual continuance, but with some intermission: for both the pause reinforceth the new onset; and if a man that is not perfect, be ever in practice, he shall as well practise his errors as his abilities, and induce one habit of both; and there is no means to help this but by seasonable intermissions; but let not a man trust his victory over his nature too far; for nature will lie buried a great time, and yet revive upon the occasion, or temptation; like as it was with Æsop's damsel, turned from a cat to a woman, who sat very demurely at the board's end till a mouse ran before her: therefore, let a man either avoid the occasion altogether, or put himself often to it, that he may be little moved with it. A man's nature is best perceived in privateness, for there is no affectation; in passion, for that putteth a man out

* "He is the best asserter *of the liberty* of his mind who bursts the chains that gall his breast, and at the same moment ceases to grieve." This quotation is from Ovid's Remedy of Love.

of his precepts; and in a new case or experiment, for there custom leaveth him. They are happy men whose natures sort with their vocations; otherwise they may say, "Multum incola fuit anima mea,"* when they converse in those things they do not affect. In studies, whatsoever a man commandeth upon himself, let him set hours for it; but whatsoever is agreeable to his nature, let him take no care for any set times; for his thoughts will fly to it of themselves, so as the spaces of other business or studies will suffice. A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other.

XXXIX.—OF CUSTOM AND EDUCATION.

MEN'S thoughts are much according to their inclination:† their discourse and speeches according to their learning and infused opinions; but their deeds are after as they have been accustomed: and, therefore, as Machiavel well noteth (though in an evil-favored instance), there is no trusting to the force of nature, nor to the bravery of words, except it be corroborate by custom. His instance is, that for the achieving of a desperate conspiracy, a man should not rest upon the fierceness of any man's nature, or his resolute undertakings; but take such a one as hath had his hands formerly in blood; but Machiavel knew not of a Friar Clement, nor a Ravillac,‡ nor a Jaureguy,§

* "My soul has long been a sojourner."

† "The wish is father to the thought," is a proverbial saying of similar meaning.

‡ He murdered Henry IV. of France, in 1610.

§ Philip II. of Spain having, in 1582, set a price upon the head of William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, the leader of the Prot

nor a Baltazar Gerard;* yet his rule holdeth still, that nature, nor the engagement of words, are not so forcible as custom. Only superstition is now so well advanced, that men of the first blood are as firm as butchers by occupation; and votary † resolution is made equipollent to custom even in matter of blood. In other things, the predominancy of custom is everywhere visible, insomuch as a man would wonder to hear men profess, protest, engage, give great words, and then do just as they have done before, as if they were dead images and engines, moved only by the wheels of custom. We see also the reign or tyranny of custom, what it is. The Indians ‡ (I mean the sect of their wise men) lay themselves quietly upon a stack of wood, and so sacrifice themselves by fire: nay, the wives strive to be burned with the corpses of their husbands. The lads of Sparta, of ancient time, were wont to be scourged upon the altar of Diana, without so much as quecking.§ I remember, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's time of England, an Irish rebel condemned, put up a petition to the deputy that he might be hanged in a withe, and not in a halter, because it had been so used with former rebels. There be monks in Russia for penance, that will sit a whole night in a vessel of water, till they be engaged with hard ice. Many examples may be put of the force of custom, both

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estants, Jaureguy, attempted to assassinate him, and severely wounded him.

* He assassinated William of Nassau, in 1584. It is supposed that this fanatic meditated the crime for six years.

† A resolution prompted by a vow of devotion to a particular principle or creed.

‡ He alludes to the Hindoos, and the ceremony of Suttee, encouraged by the Brahmins.

§ Flinching.

upon mind and body: therefore, since custom is the principal magistrate of man's life, let men by all means endeavor to obtain good customs. Certainly, custom is most perfect when it beginneth in young years: this we call education, which is, in effect, but an early custom. So we see, in languages the tongue is more pliant to all expressions and sounds, the joints are more supple to all feats of activity and motions in youth, than afterwards; for it is true, that late learners cannot so well take the ply, except it be in some minds that have not suffered themselves to fix, but have kept themselves open and prepared to receive continual amendment, which is exceeding rare: but if the force of custom, simple and separate, be great, the force of custom, copulate and conjoined and collegiate, is far greater; for their example teacheth, company comforteth, emulation quickeneth, glory raiseth; so as in such places the force of custom is in his exultation. Certainly, the great multiplication of virtues upon human nature resteth upon societies well ordained and disciplined; for commonwealths and good governments do nourish virtue grown, but do not much mend the seeds; but the misery is, that the most effectual means are now applied to the ends least to be desired.

XL.—OF FORTUNE.

It cannot be denied, but outward accidents conduce much to fortune; favor, opportunity, death of others, occasion fitting virtue: but chiefly, the mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands: "Faber quisque fortunæ suæ," * saith the poet; and the most frequent

* "Every man is the architect of his own fortune." Sallust, in his letters "De Republica Ordinanda," attributes these words

of external causes is, that the folly of one man is the fortune of another; for no man prospers so suddenly as by others' errors. "Serpens nisi serpentem comederit non fit draco."* Overt and apparent virtues bring forth praise; but there be secret and hidden virtues that bring forth fortune; certain deliveries of a man's self, which have no name. The Spanish name, "disemboltura,"† partly expresseth them, when there be not stonds‡ nor restiveness in a man's nature, but that the wheels of his mind keep way with the wheels of his fortune; for so Livy (after he had described Cato Major in these words, "In illo viro, tantum robur corporis et animi fuit, ut quocunque loco natus esset, fortunam sibi facturus videretur,"§ falleth upon that that he had "versatile ingenium:"‖ therefore, if a man look sharply and attentively, he shall see fortune; for though she be blind, yet she is not invisible. The way of Fortune is like the milky way in the sky; which is a meeting, or knot, of a number of small stars, not seen asunder, but giving light together; so are there a number of little

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to Appius Claudius Cæcus, a Roman poet whose works are now lost. Lord Bacon, in the Latin translation of his Essays, which was made under his supervision, rendered the word "poet" "comicus;" by whom he probably meant Plautus, who has this line in his "Trinumis" (Act ii. sc. 2): "Nam sapiens quidem pol ipsus fingit fortunam sibi," which has the same meaning, though in somewhat different terms.

* "A serpent, unless it has devoured a serpent, does not become a dragon."

† Or "desenvoltura," implying readiness to adapt oneself to circumstances.

‡ Impediments, causes for hesitation.

§ "In that man there was such great strength of body and mind, that in whatever station he had been born, he seemed as though he should make his fortune."

‖ "A versatile genius."

and scarce discerned virtues, or rather faculties and customs, that make men fortunate. The Italians note some of them, such as a man would little think. When they speak of one that cannot do amiss, they will throw in into his other conditions, that he hath "Poco di matto;" * and certainly, there be not two more fortunate properties, than to have a little of the fool, and not too much of the honest; therefore extreme lovers of their country, or masters, were never fortunate; neither can they be; for when a man placeth his thoughts without himself, he goeth not his own way. A hasty fortune maketh an enterpriser and remover; (the French hath it better, "entreprenant," or "remuant"); but the exercised fortune maketh the able man. Fortune is to be honored and respected, and it be but for her daughters, Confidence and Reputation; for those two Felicity breedeth; the first within a man's self, the latter in others towards him. All wise men, to decline the envy of their own virtues, use to ascribe them to Providence and Fortune; for so they may the better assume them: and, besides, it is greatness in a man to be the care of the higher powers. So Cæsar said to the pilot in the tempest, "Cæsarem portas, et fortunam ejus." † So Sylla chose the name of "Felix," ‡ and not of "Magnus:" § and it hath been noted, that those who ascribe openly too much to their own wisdom and policy, end unfortunate. It is written, that Timotheus, ‖ the Athe-

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* "A little of the fool."

† "Thou carriest Cæsar and his fortunes."

‡ "The fortunate." He attributed his success to the intervention of Hercules, to whom he paid especial veneration.

§ "The Great."

‖ A successful Athenian general, the son of Conon, and the friend of Plato.

nian, after he had, in the account he gave to the state of his government, often interlaced this speech, "and in this Fortune had no part," never prospered in anything he undertook afterwards. Certainly there be, whose fortunes are like Homer's verses, that have a slide * and easiness more than the verses of other poets; as Plutarch saith of Timoleon's fortune in respect of that of Agesilaus or Epaminondas: and that this should be, no doubt it is much in a man's self.

XLI.—OF USURY.†

MANY have made witty invectives against usury. They say that it is a pity the devil should have God's part, which is the tithe; that the usurer is the greatest Sabbath-breaker, because his plough goeth every Sunday; that the usurer is the drone that Virgil speaketh of:

"Ignavum fucos pecus a præsepibus arcent;" ‡

that the usurer breaketh the first law that was made for mankind after the fall, which was, "in sudore vultus tui comedes panem tuum;"§ not, "in sudore vultus alieni;"‖ that usurers should have orange-tawny ¶ bonnets, because they do Judaize; that it is

* Fluency or smoothness.

† Lord Bacon seems to use the word in the general sense of "lending money upon interest."

‡ "Drive from their hives the drones, a lazy race."—Georgics, b. iv. 168.

§ "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread."—Gen. iii. 19.

‖ "In the sweat of the face of another."

¶ In the middle ages the Jews were compelled, by legal enactment, to wear peculiar dresses and colors; one of these was orange.

against nature for money to beget money, and the like. I say this only, that usury is a "concessum propter duritiem cordis:"* for since there must be borrowing and lending, and men are so hard of heart as they will not lend freely, usury must be permitted. Some others have made suspicious and cunning propositions of banks, discovery of men's estates, and other inventions; but few have spoken of usury usefully. It is good to set before us the incommodities and commodities of usury, that the good may be either weighed out, or culled out; and warily to provide, that, while we make forth to that which is better, we meet with not that which is worse.

The discommodities of usury are, first, that it makes fewer merchants; for were it not for this lazy trade of usury, money would not lie still, but would in great part be employed upon merchandising, which is the "vena porta" † of wealth in a state: the second, that it makes poor merchants; for as a farmer cannot husband his ground so well if he sit at a great rent, so the merchant cannot drive his trade so well, if he sit ‡ at great usury: the third is incident to the other two; and that is, the decay of customs of kings, or states, which ebb or flow with merchandising: the fourth, that it bringeth the treasure of a realm or state into a few hands; for the usurer being at certainties, and others at uncertainties, at the end of the game most of the money will be in the box; and ever a state flourisheth when wealth is more equally spread: the fifth, that it beats down the price of land; for the employment of money is chiefly either merchandising, or purchasing, and usury waylays

* "A concession by reason of hardness of heart." He alludes to the words in St. Matthew xix. 8.

† See Note to Essay xix. ‡ Hold.

both: the sixth, that it doth dull and damp all industries, improvements, and new inventions, wherein money would be stirring, if it were not for this slug: the last, that it is the canker and ruin of many men's estates, which in process of time breeds a public poverty.

On the other side, the commodities of usury are, first, that howsoever usury in some respect hindereth merchandising, yet in some other it advanceth it; for it is certain that the greatest part of trade is driven by young merchants upon borrowing at interest; so as if the usurer either call in, or keep back his money, there will ensue presently a great stand of trade: the second is, that were it not for this easy borrowing upon interest, men's necessities would draw upon them a most sudden undoing, in that they would be forced to sell their means (be it lands or good), far under foot, and so, whereas usury doth but gnaw upon them, bad markets would swallow them quite up. As for mortgaging or pawning, it will little mend the matter: for either men will not take pawns without use, or if they do, they will look precisely for the forfeiture. I remember a cruel moneyed man in the country, that would say, "The devil take this usury, it keeps us from forfeitures of mortgages and bonds." The third and last is, that it is a vanity to conceive that there would be ordinary borrowing without profit; and it is impossible to conceive the number of inconveniences that will ensue, if borrowing be cramped: therefore to speak of the abolishing of usury is idle; all states have ever had it in one kind or rate, or other; so as that opinion must be sent to Utopia.*

* The imaginary country described in Sir Thomas More's political romance of that name.

To speak now of the reformation and reglement * of usury, how the discommodities of it may be best avoided, and the commodities retained. It appears, by the balance of commodities and discommodities of usury, two things are to be reconciled; the one that the tooth of usury be grinded, that it bite not too much; the other, that there be left open a means to invite moneyed men to lend to the merchants, for the continuing and quickening of trade. This cannot be done, except you introduce two several sorts of usury, a less and a greater; for if you reduce usury to one low rate, it will ease the common borrower, but the merchant will be to seek for money; and it is to be noted, that the trade of merchandise being the most lucrative, may bear usury at a good rate: other contracts not so.

To serve both intentions, the way would be briefly thus: that there be two rates of usury; the one free and general for all; the other under license only to certain persons, and in certain places of merchandising. First, therefore, let usury in general be reduced to five in the hundred, and let that rate be proclaimed to be free and current; and let the state shut itself out to take any penalty for the same; this will preserve borrowing from any general stop or dryness; this will ease infinite borrowers in the country; this will, in good part, raise the price of land, because land purchased at sixteen years' purchase will yield six in the hundred, and somewhat more whereas this rate of interest yields but five: this by like reason will encourage and edge industries and profitable improvements, because many will rather venture in that kind, than take five in the hundred, especially having been used to greater profit. Secondly,

* Regulation.

let there be certain persons licensed to lend to known merchants upon usury, at a higher rate, and let it be with the cautious following: let the rate be, even with the merchant himself, somewhat more easy than that he used formerly to pay; for by that means all borrowers shall have some ease by this reformation, be he merchant, or whosoever; let it be no bank or common stock, but every man be master of his own money; not that I altogether mislike banks, but they will hardly be brooked, in regard of certain suspicions. Let the state be answered* some small matter for the license, and the rest left to the leader; for if the abatement be but small, it will no whit discourage the lender; for he, for example, that took before ten or nine in the hundred, will sooner descend to eight in the hundred, than give over his trade of usury; and go from certain gains to gains of hazard. Let these licensed lenders be in number indefinite, but restrained to certain principal cities and towns of merchandising; for then they will be hardly able to color other men's moneys in the country: so as the license of nine will not suck away the current rate of five; for no man will send his moneys far off, nor put them into unknown hands.

If it be objected that this doth in a sort authorize usury, which before was in some places but permissive; the answer is, that it is better to mitigate usury by declaration, than to suffer it to rage by connivance.

XLII.—OF YOUTH AND AGE.

A MAN that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time; but that happeneth rarely. Generally, youth is like the first cogitations, not so wise

* Be paid.

as the second: for there is a youth in thoughts, as well as in ages; and yet the invention of young men is more lively than that of old, and imaginations stream into their minds better, and, as it were, more divinely. Natures that have much heat, and great and violent desires and perturbations, are not ripe for action till they have passed the meridian of their years: as it was with Julius Cæsar and Septimius Severus; of the latter of whom it is said, "Juventutem egit erroribus, imo furoribus plenam;" * and yet he was the ablest emperor, almost, of all the list; but reposed natures may do well in youth, as it is seen in Augustus Cæsar, Cosmus Duke of Florence, Gaston de Foix,† and others. On the other side, heat and vivacity in age is an excellent composition for business. Young men are fitter to invent than to judge, fitter for execution than for counsel, and fitter for new projects than for settled business; for the experience of age, in things that fall within the compass of it, directeth them; but in new things abuseth them. The errors of young men are the ruin of business; but the errors of aged men amount but to this, that more might have been done, or sooner.

Young men, in the conduct and manage of actions, embrace more than they can hold, stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end, without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue some few principles which they have chanced upon absurdly; care not to innovate, which draws unknown inconveniences; use extreme remedies at first; and that, which doubleth all errors, will not acknowledge or retract them, like an unready

* "He passed his youth full of errors, of madness even."

† He was nephew of Louis XII. of France, and commanded the French armies in Italy against the Spaniards. After a brilliant career, he was killed at the battle of Ravenna, in 1512.

horse, that will not neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period, but content themselves with a mediocrity of success. Certainly it is good to compound employments of both; for that will be good for the present, because the virtues of either age may correct the defects of both; and good for succession, that young men may be learners, while men in age are actors; and, lastly, good for externe accidents, because authority followeth old men, and favor and popularity youth: but for the moral part, perhaps, youth will have the pre-eminence, as age hath for the politic. A certain rabbin, upon the text, "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams"* inferreth that young men are admitted nearer to God than old, because vision is a clearer revelation than a dream; and certainly, the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth: and age doth profit rather in the powers of understanding, than in the virtues of the will and affections. There be some have an over-early ripeness in their years, which fadeth betimes: these are, first, such as have brittle wits, the edge whereof is soon turned: such as was Hermogenes† the rhetorician, whose books are exceeding subtle, who afterwards waxed stupid: a second sort is of those that have some natural disposition, which have better grace in youth than in age; such as is a fluent and luxuriant speech, which becomes youth well, but not age: so Tully saith of Hortensius, "Idem manebat, neque idem decebat:"‡ the third is of

* Joel ii. 28, quoted Acts ii. 17.

† He lived in the second century after Christ, and is said to have lost his memory at the age of twenty-five.

‡ "He remained the same, but *with the advance of years* was not so becoming."

such as take too high a strain at the first, and are magnanimous more than tract of years can uphold; as was Scipio Africanus, of whom Livy saith, in effect, "Ultima primis cedebant." *

XLIII.—OF BEAUTY.

Virtue is like a rich stone, best plain set; and surely virtue is best in a body that is comely, though not of delicate features; and that hath rather dignity of presence, than beauty of aspect; neither is it almost seen that very beautiful persons are otherwise of great virtue; as if nature were rather busy not to err, than in labor to produce excellency; and therefore they prove accomplished, but not of great spirit; and study rather behavior, than virtue. But this holds not always: for Augustus Cæsar, Titus Vespasianus, Philip le Bel of France, Edward the Fourth of England,† Alcibiades of Athens, Ismael the Sophy of Persia, were all high and great spirits, and yet the most beautiful men of their times. In beauty, that of favor, is more than that of color; and that of decent and gracious motion, more than that of favor.‡ That is the best part of beauty, which a picture cannot express; no, nor the first sight of the life. There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell

* "The close was unequal to the beginning." This quotation is not correct; the words are—"Memorabilior prima pars vitæ quam postrema fuit,"—"The first part of his life was more distinguished than the latter."—Livy, xxxviii. ch. 53.

† By the context, he would seem to consider "great spirit" and "virtue" as convertible terms. Edward IV., however, has no claim to be considered as a virtuous or magnanimous man, though he possessed great physical courage.

‡ Features.

whether; Apelles or Albert Durer were the more trifler; whereof the one would make a personage by geometrical proportions: the other, by taking the best parts out of divers faces to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody but the painter that made them: not but I think a painter may make a better face than ever was; but he must do it by a kind of felicity (as a musician that maketh an excellent air in music), and not by rule. A man shall see faces, that, if you examine them part by part, you shall find never a good; and yet altogether do well. If it be true that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no marvel, though persons in years seem many times more amiable; "Pulchrorum autumnus pulcher;"* for no youth can be comely but by pardon,† and considering the youth as to make up the comeliness. Beauty is as summer fruits, which are easy to corrupt, and cannot last; and, for the most part, it makes a dissolute youth, and an age a little out of countenance; but yet certainly again, if it light well, it maketh virtues shine, and vices blush.

XLIV.—OF DEFORMITY.

DEFORMED persons are commonly even with nature; for as nature hath done ill by them, so do they by nature, being for the most part (as the Scripture saith), "void of natural affection;"‡ and so they have their revenge of nature. Certainly there is a consent between the body and the mind, and where nature erreth in the one, she ventureth in the other: "Ubi peccat in uno, periclitatur in altero:"§ but because there is in man an

* "The autumn of the beautiful is beautiful."

† By making allowances. ‡ Rom. i. 31; II. Tim. iii. 3.

§ "Where she errs in the one, she ventures in the other."

election, touching the frame of his mind, and a necessity in the frame of his body, the stars of natural inclination are sometimes obscured by the sun of discipline and virtue; therefore it is good to consider of deformity, not as a sign which is more deceivable, but as a cause which seldom faileth of the effect. Whosoever hath anything fixed in his person that doth not induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to secure and deliver himself from scorn; therefore, all deformed persons are extreme bold; first, as in their own defense, as being exposed to scorn, but in process of time by a general habit. Also it stirreth in them industry, and especially of this kind, to watch and observe the weakness of others, that they may have somewhat to repay. Again, in their superiors, it quencheth jealousy towards them, as persons that they think they may at pleasure despise: and it layeth their competitors and emulators asleep, as never believing they should be in possibility of advancement till they see them in possession; so that upon the matter, in a great wit, deformity is an advantage to rising. Kings in ancient times (and at this present in some countries) were wont to put great trust in eunuchs, because they that are envious towards all are more obnoxious and officious towards one; but yet their trust towards them hath rather been as to good spials,* and good whisperers, than good magistrates and officers: and much like is the reason of deformed persons. Still the ground is, they will, if they be of spirit, seek to free themselves from scorn: which must be either by virtue or malice; and, therefore, let it not be marvelled, if sometimes they prove excellent persons; as was Agesilaüs, Zanger the son of Solyman,† Æsop, Gasca presi-

* Spies. † Solyman the Magnificent, Sultan of the Turks.

dent of Peru; and Socrates may go likewise amongst them, with others.

XLV.—OF BUILDING.

HOUSES are built to live in, and not to look on; therefore let use be preferred before uniformity, except where both may be had. Leave the goodly fabrics of houses, for beauty only, to the enchanted palaces of the poets, who build them with small cost. He that builds a fair house upon an ill seat,* committeth himself to prison: neither do I reckon it an ill seat only where the air is unwholesome, but likewise where the air is unequal; as you shall see many fine seats set upon a knap† of ground, environed with higher hills round about it, whereby the heat of the sun is pent in, and the wind gathereth as in troughs; so as you shall have, and that suddenly, as great diversity of heat and cold as if you dwelt in several places. Neither is it ill air only that maketh an ill seat; but ill ways, ill markets, and, if you will consult with Momus,‡ ill neighbors. I speak not of many more; want of water, want of wood, shade, and shelter, want of fruitfulness, and mixture of grounds of several natures; want of prospect, want of level grounds, want of places at some near distance for sports of hunting, hawking, and races; too near the sea, too remote; having the commodity of navigable rivers, or the discommodity of their overflowing; too far off from the great cities, which may hinder business; or too near them, which lurcheth§ all provision and

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* Site. † Knoll.

‡ Having a liking for cheerful society. Momus being the god of mirth.

§ Eats up.

maketh everything dear; where a man hath a great living laid together; and where he is scanted; all which, as it is impossible perhaps to find together, so it is good to know them, and think of them, that a man may take as many as he can; and if he have several dwellings, that he sort them so, that what he wanteth in the one he may find in the other. Lucullus answered Pompey well, who, when he saw his stately galleries and rooms so large and lightsome, in one of his houses, said; "Surely an excellent place for summer, but how do you in winter?" Lucullus answered, "Why, do you not think me as wise as some fowls are, that ever change their abode towards the winter?"

To pass from the seat to the house itself, we will do as Cicero doth in the orator's art, who writes books De Oratore, and a book he entitles Orator; whereof the former delivers the precepts of the art, and the latter the perfection. We will therefore describe a princely palace, making a brief model thereof; for it is strange to see, now in Europe, such huge buildings as the Vatican and Escurial,* and some others be, and yet scarce a very fair room in them.

First, therefore, I say, you cannot have a perfect palace, except you have two several sides: a side for the banquet, as is spoken of in the book of Esther,† and a side for the household; the one for feasts and triumphs, and the other for dwelling. I understand both these sides to be not only returns, but parts of the front; and to be uniform without, though severally partitioned

* A vast edifice, about twenty miles from Madrid, founded by Philip II.

† Esth. i. 5: "The king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the King's palace."

within; and to be on both sides of a great and stately tower in the midst of the front, that as it were joineth them together on either hand. I would have, on the side of the banquet in front, one only goodly room above stairs, of some forty foot high; and under it a room for a dressing or preparing place, at times of triumphs. On the other side, which is the household side, I wish it divided at the first into a hall and a chapel, with a partition between), both of good state and bigness; and those not to go all the length, but to have at the further end a winter and a summer parlor, both fair; and under these rooms a fair and large cellar sunk under ground; and likewise some privy kitchens, with butteries and pantries, and the like. As for the tower, I would have it two stories, of eighteen foot high apiece above the two wings; and a goodly leads upon the top, railed with statues interposed; and the same tower to be divided into rooms, as shall be thought fit. The stairs likewise to the upper rooms, let them be upon a fair open newel,* and finely railed in with images of wood cast into a brass color; and a very fair landing-place at the top. But this to be, if you do not point any of the lower rooms for a dining-place of servants; for, otherwise, you shall have the servants' dinner after your own: for the steam of it will come up as in a tunnel.† And so much for the front: only I understand the height of the first stairs to be sixteen foot, which is the height of the lower room.

Beyond this front is there to be a fair court, but three sides of it of a far lower building than the front; and in

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* The cylinder formed by the small end of the steps of winding stairs.

† The funnel of a chimney.

all the four corners of that court fair staircases, cast into turrets on the outside, and not within the row of buildings themselves: but those towers are not to be of the height of the front, but rather proportionable to the lower building. Let the court not be paved, for that striketh up a great heat in summer, and much cold in winter: but only some side alleys with a cross, and the quarters to graze, being kept shorn, but not too near shorn. The row of return on the banquet side, let it be all stately galleries: in which galleries let there be three or five fine cupolas in the length of it, placed at equal distance, and fine colored windows of several works: on the household side, chambers of presence and ordinary entertainments, with some bed-chambers: and let all three sides be a double house, without thorough lights on the sides, that you may have rooms from the sun, both for forenoon and afternoon. Cast it also, that you may have rooms both for summer and winter; shady for summer, and warm for winter. You shall have sometimes fair houses so full of glass, that one cannot tell where to become * to be out of the sun or cold. For inbowed † windows, I hold them of good use (in cities, indeed, upright ‡ do better, in respect of the uniformity towards the street); for they be pretty retiring places for conference; and besides, they keep both the wind and sun off; for that which would strike almost through the room doth scarce pass the window: but let them be but few, four in the court, on the sides only.

Beyond this court, let there be an inward court, of the same square and height, which is to be environed

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* Where to go. † Bow, or bay windows.
‡ Flush with the wall.

with the garden on all sides; and in the inside, cloistered on all sides upon decent and beautiful arches, as high as the first story: on the under story towards the garden, let it be turned to grotto, or place of shade, or estivation: and only have opening and windows towards the garden, and be level upon the floor, no whit sunk under ground, to avoid all dampishness: and let there be a fountain, or some fair work of statues in the midst of this court, and to be paved as the other court was. These buildings to be for privy lodgings on both sides, and the end for privy galleries; whereof you must foresee that one of them be for an infirmary, if the prince or any special person should be sick, with chambers, bed-chamber, "anticamera," * and "recamera," † joining to it; thus upon the second story. Upon the ground story, a fair gallery, open, upon pillars; and upon the third story, likewise an open gallery upon pillars, to take the prospect and freshness of the garden. At both corners of the further side, by way of return, let there be two delicate or rich cabinets, daintily paved, richly hanged, glazed with crystalline glass, and a rich cupola in the midst; and all other elegancy that can be thought upon. In the upper gallery, too, I wish that there may be, if the place will yield it, some fountains running in divers places from the wall, with some fine avoidances. ‡ And thus much for the model of the palace; save that you must have, before you come to the front, three courts; a green court plain, with a wall about it; a second court of the same, but more garnished with little turrets, or rather embellishments, upon the wall; and a third court, to make a square with the front, but not to be built, nor yet enclosed with a naked wall, but

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* Anti-chamber. † Withdrawing-room. ‡ Watercourses.

enclosed with terraces leaded aloft, and fairly garnished on the three sides; and cloistered on the inside with pillars, and not with arches below. As for offices, let them stand at distance, with some low galleries to pass from them to the palace itself.

XLVI.—OF GARDENS.

God Almighty first planted a garden; and, indeed it is the purest of human pleasures; it is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man; without which buildings and palaces are but gross handy-works: and a man shall ever see, that, when ages grow to civility and elegancy, men come to build stately, sooner than to garden finely; as if gardening were the greater perfection. I do hold it in the royal ordering of gardens, there ought to be gardens for all the months in the year, in which, severally, things of beauty may be then in season. For December, and January, and the latter part of November, you must take such things as are green all winter: holly, ivy, bays, juniper, cypress-tree, yew, pineapple-trees;* fir-trees, rosemary, lavender; periwinkle, the white, the purple, and the blue; germander, flags, orange-trees, lemon-trees, and myrtles, if they be stoved;† and sweet marjoram, warm set. There followeth, for the latter part of January and February, the mezereon-tree, which then blossoms: crocus vernus, both the yellow and the grey; primroses, anemones, the early tulip, the hyacinthus orientalis, chamaïris fritellaria. For March, there comes violets, especially the single blue, which are the earliest; the yellow daffodil, the daisy, the almond-tree in blossom, the peach-tree in

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* Pine-trees. † Kept warm in a greenhouse.

blossom, the cornelian-tree in blossom, sweet-briar. In April follow the double white violet, the wall-flower, the stock-gilliflower, the cowslip, flower-de-luces, and lilies of all natures; rosemary-flowers, the tulip, the double peony, the pale daffodil, the French honeysuckle, the cherry-tree in blossom, the damascene * and plum-trees in blossoms, the white thorn in leaf, the lilac-tree. In May and June come pinks of all sorts, specially the blush-pink; roses of all kinds, except the musk, which comes later; honeysuckles, strawberries, bugloss, columbine, the French marygold, flos Africanus, cherry-tree in fruit, ribes, † figs in fruit, rasps, vine-flowers, lavender in flowers, the sweet satyrian, with the white flower; herba muscaria, lilium convallium, the apple-tree in blossom. In July come gilliflowers of all varieties, musk-roses, the lime-tree in blossom, early pears, and plums in fruit, genitings, ‡ codlins. In August come plums of all sorts in fruit, pears, apricots, barberries, filberts, musk-melons, monks-hoods of all colors. In September come grapes, apples, poppies of all colors, peaches, melocotones, § nectarines, cornelians, ‖ wardens, ¶ quinces. In October, and the beginning of November comes services, medlars, bullaces, roses cut or removed to come late, hollyoaks, and such like. These particulars are for the climate of London; but my meaning is perceived, that you may have "ver perpetuum," ** as the place affords.

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* The damson, or plum of Damascus. † Currants.

‡ An apple that is gathered very early.

§ A kind of quince, so called from "cotoneum," or "cydonium," the Latin name of the quince.

‖ The fruit of the cornel-tree.

¶ The warden was a large pear, so called from its keeping well. Warden-pie was formerly much esteemed in England.

** Perpetual spring.

And because the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air (where it comes and goes, like the warbling of music), than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight, than to know what be the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air. Roses, damask and red, are fast flowers * of their smells; so that you may walk by a whole row of them, and find nothing of their sweetness; yea, though it be in a morning's dew. Bays, likewise, yield no smell as they grow, rosemary little, nor sweet marjoram; that which, above all others, yields the sweetest smell in the air, is the violet, especially the white double violet, which comes twice a year, about middle of April, and about Bartholomew tide. Next to that is the musk-rose; then the strawberry leaves dying, with a most excellent cordial smell; then the flower of the vines, it is a little dust like the dust of a bent,† which grows upon the cluster in the first coming forth; then sweet-briar, then wall-flowers, which are very delightful to be set upon a parlor or lower chamber window; then pinks and gilliflowers, specially the matted pink and clove gilliflower; then the flowers of the lime-tree; then the honeysuckles, so they be somewhat afar off. Of bean-flowers ‡ I speak not, because they are field flowers; but those which perfume the air most delightfully, not passed by as the rest, but being trodden upon and crushed, are three; that is, burnet, wild thyme, and water-mints; therefore you are to set whole alleys of them, to have the pleasure when you walk or tread.

For gardens (speaking of those which are indeed

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* Flowers that do not send forth their smell at any distance.

† A species of grass of the genus argostis.

‡ The blossoms of the bean.

prince-like, as we have done of buildings), the contents ought not well to be under thirty acres of ground, and to be divided into three parts; a green in the entrance, a heath, or desert, in the going forth, and the main garden in the midst, besides alleys on both sides; and I like well, that four acres of ground be assigned to the green, six to the heath, four and four to either side, and twelve to the main garden. The green hath two pleasures: the one, because nothing is more pleasant to the eye than green grass kept finely shorn; the other, because it will give you a fair alley in the midst, by which you may go in front upon a stately hedge, which is to enclose the garden; but because the alley will be long, and in great heat of the year, or day, you ought not to buy the shade in the garden by going in the sun through the green, therefore you are, of either side the green, to plant a covert alley, upon carpenter's work, about twelve foot in height, by which you may go in shade into the garden. As for the making of knots, or figures, with divers colored earths, that they may lie under the windows of the house on that side which the garden stands, they be but toys; you may see as good sights many times in tarts. The garden is best to be square, encompassed on all the four sides with a stately arched hedge, the arches to be upon pillars of carpenter's work, of some ten foot high, and six foot broad, and the spaces between of the same dimension with the breadth of the arch. Over the arches let there be an entire hedge of some four foot high, framed also upon carpenter's work; and upon the upper hedge, over every arch, a little turret, with a belly enough to receive a cage of birds: and over every space between the arches some other little figure, with broad plates of round colored glass gilt, for the sun to play upon: but this

hedge, I intend to be raised upon a bank, not steep but gently slope, of some six foot, set all with flowers. Also I understand, that this square of the garden should not be the whole breadth of the ground, but to leave on either side ground enough for diversity of side alleys, unto which the two covert alleys of the green may deliver you,* but there must be no alleys with hedges at either end of this great enclosure; not at the hither end, for letting † your prospect upon this fair hedge from the green; nor at the further end, for letting your prospect from the hedge through the arches upon heath.

For the ordering of the ground within the great hedge, I leave it to variety of device; advising, nevertheless, that whatsoever form you cast it into first, it be not too bushy, or full of work: wherein I, for my part, do not like images cut out in juniper or other garden stuff; they be for children. Little low hedges, round like welts, with some pretty pyramids, I like well; and in some places fair columns, upon frames of carpenter's work. I would also have the alleys spacious and fair. You may have closer alleys upon the side grounds, but none in the main garden. I wish also, in the very middle, a fair mount, with three ascents and alleys, enough for four to walk abreast; which I would have to be perfect circles, without any bulwarks or embossments; and the whole mount to be thirty foot high, and some fine banqueting-house with some chimneys neatly cast, and without too much glass.

For fountains, they are a great beauty and refreshment; but pools mar all, and make the garden unwholesome and full of flies and frogs. Fountains I intend to be of two natures: the one that sprinkleth or spouteth

* Bring or lead you. † Impeding.

water: the other a fair recipt of water, of some thirty or forty foot square, but without fish, or slime, or mud. For the first, the ornaments of images, gilt or of marble, which are in use, do well: but the main matter is so to convey the water, as it never stay, either in the bowls or in the cistern: that the water be never by rest discolored, green, or red, or the like, or gather any mossiness or putrefaction; besides that, it is to be cleaned every day by the hand: also some steps up to it, and some fine pavement about it doth well. As for the other kind of fountain, which we may call a bathing-pool, it may admit much curiosity and beauty, wherewith we will not trouble ourselves: as, that the bottom be finely paved, and with images: the sides likewise; and withal embellished with colored glass, and such things of lustre; encompassed also with fine rails of low statues: but the main point is the same which we mentioned in the former kind of fountain; which is, that the water be in perpetual motion, fed by a water higher than the pool, and delivered into it by fair spouts, and then discharged away under ground, by some equality of bores, that it stay little: and for fine devices, of arching water* without spilling, and making it rise in several forms (of feathers, drinking-glasses, canopies, and the like); they be pretty things to look on, but nothing to health and sweetness.

For the heath, which was the third part of our plot, I wish it to be framed as much as may be to a natural wildness. Trees I would have none in it, but some thickets made only of sweet-briar and honeysuckle, and some wild vine amongst; and the ground set with

* Causing the water to fall in a perfect arch, without any spray escaping from the jet.

violets, strawberries, and primroses; for these are sweet, and prosper in the shade; and these to be in the heath here and there, not in any order. I like also little heaps, in the nature of mole-hills (such as are in wild heaths), to be set, some with wild thyme, some with pinks, some with germander, that gives a good flower to the eye; some with periwinkle, some with violets, some with strawberries, some with cowslips, some with daisies, some with red roses, some with lilium convallium,* some with sweet-Williams red, some with bear's-foot, and the like low flowers, being withal sweet and sightly; part of which heaps to be with standards of little bushes pricked upon their top, and part without: the standards to be roses, juniper, holly, barberries (but here and there, because of the smell of their blossoms), red currants, gooseberries, rosemary, bays, sweet-briar, and such like: but these standards to be kept with cutting, that they grow not out of course.

For the side grounds, you are to fill them with variety of alleys, private, to give a full shade; some of them, wheresoever the sun be. You are to frame some of them likewise for shelter, that when the wind blows sharp, you may walk as in a gallery: and those alleys must be likewise hedged at both ends, to keep out the wind; and these closer alleys must be ever finely gravelled, and no grass, because of going wet. In many of these alleys, likewise, you are to set fruit-trees of all sorts, as well as upon the walls as in ranges,† and this should be generally observed, that the borders wherein you plant your fruit-trees be fair, and large, and low, and not steep; and set with fine flowers, but thin and sparingly, lest they deceive‡ the

* Lilies of the valley. † In rows.

‡ Insidiously substract nourishment from.

trees. At the end of both the side grounds I would have a mount of some pretty height, leaving the wall of the enclosure breast-high, to look abroad into the fields.

For the main garden I do not deny but there should be some fair alleys ranged on both sides, with fruit-trees, and some pretty tufts of fruit-trees and arbors with seats, set in some decent order; but these to be by no means set too thick, but to leave the main garden so as it be not close, but the air open and free. For as for shade, I would have you rest upon the alleys of the side grounds, there to walk, if you be disposed, in the heat of the year or day; but to make account* that the main garden is for the more temperate parts of the year, and, in the heat of summer for the morning and the evening or overcast days.

For aviaries, I like them not, except they be of that largeness as they may be turfted, and have living plants and bushes set in them; that the birds may have more scope and natural nestling, and that no foulness appear in the floor of the aviary. So I have made a platform of a princely garden, partly by precept, partly by drawing; not a model, but some general lines of it; and in this I have spared for no cost: but it is nothing for great princes, that for the most part taking advice with workmen with no less cost set their things together, and sometimes add statues and such things, for state and magnificence, but nothing to the true pleasure of a garden.

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* To consider or expect.

XLVII.--OF NEGOTIATING.

It is generally better to deal by speech than by letter; and by the meditation of a third than by a man's self. Letters are good, when a man would draw an answer by letter back again; or when it may serve for a man's justification afterwards to produce his own letter; or where it may be danger to be interrupted, or heard by pieces. To deal in person is good, when a man's face breedeth regard, as commonly with inferiors; or in tender cases where a man's eye upon the countenance of him with whom he speaketh, may give him a direction how far to go: and generally where a man will reserve to himself liberty, either to disavow or to expound. In choice of instruments, it is better to choose men of a plainer sort, that are like to do that, that is committed to them, and to report back again faithfully the success, than those that are cunning to contrive out of other men's business somewhat to grace themselves, and will help the matter in report, for satisfaction sake. Use also such persons as affect * the business wherein they are employed, for that quickeneth much; and such as are fit for the matter, as bold men for expostulation, fair-spoken men for persuasion, crafty men for inquiry and observation, froward and absurd men for business that doth not well bear out itself. Use also such as have been lucky and prevailed before in things wherein you have employed them; for that breeds confidence, and they will strive to maintain their prescription. It is better to sound a person with whom one deals afar off, than to fall upon the point at first, except you mean to surprise him by some short question. It is better dealing with men

* Love, are pleased with.

in appetite,* than with those that are where they would be. If a man deal with another upon conditions, the start of first performance is all: which a man cannot reasonably demand, except either the nature of the thing be such, which must go before: or else a man can persuade the other party, that he shall still need him in some other thing; or else that he be counted the honester man. All practice is to discover, or to work. Men discover themselves in trust, in passion, at unawares; and of necessity, when they would have somewhat done, and cannot find an apt pretext. If you would work any man, you must either know his nature and fashions, and so lead him; or his ends, and so persuade him; or his weakness and disadvantages, and so awe him, or those that have interest in him, and so and so govern him. In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their ends, to interpret their speeches; and it is good to say little to them, and that which they least look for. In all negotiations of difficulty, a man may not look to sow and reap at once; but must prepare business, and so ripen it by degrees.

XLVIII.—OF FOLLOWERS AND FRIENDS.

Costly followers are not to be liked; lest while a man maketh his train longer, he make his wings shorter. I reckon to be costly, not them alone which charge the purse, but which are wearisome and importune in suits. Ordinary followers ought to challenge no higher conditions than countenance, recommendation, and pro-

* It is more advantageous to deal with men whose desires are not yet satisfied than with those who have gained all they have wished for, and are likely to be proof against inducements.

tection from wrongs. Factious followers are worse to be liked, which follow not upon affection to him with whom they range themselves, but upon discontentment conceived against some other; whereupon commonly ensueth that ill intelligence, that we many times see between great personages. Likewise glorious* followers, who make themselves as trumpets of the commendation of those they follow, are full of inconveniences, for they taint business through want of secrecy; and they export honor from a man and make him a return in envy. There is a kind of followers, likewise, which are dangerous, being indeed espials; which inquire the secrets of the house, and bear tales of them to others; yet such men, many times, are in great favor; for they are officious, and commonly exchange tales. The following by certain estates† of men answerable to that which a great person himself professeth (as of soldiers to him that hath been employed in the wars, and the like) hath ever been a thing civil and well taken even in monarchies, so it be without too much pomp or popularity, but the most honorable kind of following, is to be followed as one that apprehendeth to advance virtue and desert in all sorts of persons; and yet, where there is no eminent odds in sufficiency it is better to take with the more passable, than with the more able; and besides, to speak truth in base times, active men are of more use than virtuous. It is true, that in government, it is good to use men of one rank equally: for to countenance some extraordinarily, is to make them insolent and the rest discontent; because they may

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* In the sense of the Latin "gloriosus," "boastful," "bragging."

† Professions or classes.

claim a due: but contrariwise in favor, to use men with much difference and election is good; for it maketh the persons preferred more thankful, and the rest more officious: because all is of favor. It is good discretion not to make too much of any man at the first; because one cannot hold out that proportion. To be governed (as we call it) by one, is not safe; for it shows softness,* and gives a freedom to scandal and disreputation; for those that would not censure, or speak ill of a man immediately, will talk more boldly of those that are so great with them, and thereby wound their honor; yet to be distracted with many, is worse; for it makes men to be of the last impression, and full of change. To take advice of some few friends is over honorable; for lookers-on many times see more than gamesters; and the vale best discovereth the hill. There is little friendship in the world, and least of all between equals, which was wont† to be magnified That that is, is between

* Weakness or indecision of character.

† He probably alludes to the ancient stories of the friendship of Orestes and Pylades, Theseus and Pirithous, Damon and Pythias, and others, and the maxims of the ancient Philosophers. Aristotle considers that equality in circumstances and station is one requisite of friendship. Seneca and Quintus Curtius express the same opinion. It seems hardly probable that Lord Bacon reflected deeply when he penned this passage, for between equals, jealousy, the most insidious of all the enemies of friendship, has the least chance of originating. Dr. Johnson says: "Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration, but commonly take away that easy freedom and familiarity of intercourse without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be friendship.—*The Rambler.* No. 64.

superior and inferior,* whose fortunes may comprehend the one the other.

XLIX.—OF SUITORS.

Many ill matters and projects are undertaken; and private suits do putrefy the public good. Many good matters are undertaken with bad minds; I mean not only corrupt minds, but crafty minds; that intend not performance. Some embrace suits, which never mean to deal effectually in them; but if they see there may be life in the matter, by some other means they will be content to win a thank, or take a second reward, or at least, to make use in the mean time of the suitor's hopes. Some take hold of suits only for an occasion to cross some other, or to make an information, whereof they could not otherwise have apt pretext, without care what become of the suit when that turn is served; or, generally to make other men's business a kind of entertainment to bring in their own: nay, some undertake suits with a full purpose to let them fall; to the end to gratify the adverse party, or competitor. Surely there is in some sort a right in every suit; either a right of equity, if it be a suit of controversy, or a right of desert, if it be a suit of petition. If affection lead a man to favor the wrong side in justice, let him rather use his countenance to compound the matter than to carry it. If affection lead a man to favor the less worthy in desert, let him do it without depraving* or disabling the better deserver. In suits which a man doth not well understand, it is good to refer them to some

* In such a case, gratitude and admiration exist on the one hand, esteem and confidence on the other.

* Lowering, or humiliating.

friend of trust and judgment, that may report whether he may deal in them with honor: but let him choose well his referendaries,* for else he may be led by the nose. Suitors are so distasted† with delays and abuses, that plain dealing in denying to deal in suits at first, and reporting the success barely,‡ and in challenging no more thanks than one hath deserved, is grown not only honorable but also gracious. In suits of favor, the first coming ought to take little place; § so far forth ‖ consideration may be had of his trust, that if intelligence of the matter could not otherwise have been had but by him, advantage be not taken of the note,¶ but the party left to his other means: and in some sort recompensed for his discovery. To be ignorant of the value of a suit, is simplicity; as well as to be ignorant of the right thereof, is want of conscience. Secrecy in suits is a great mean of obtaining; for voicing them to be in forwardness may discourage some kind of suitors; but doth quicken and awake others: but timing of the suit is the principal; timing I say not only in respect of the person that should grant it, but in respect of those which are like to cross it. Let a man, in the choice of his mean, rather choose the fittest mean, than the greatest mean; and rather them that deal in certain things, than those that are general. The reparation of a denial is sometimes equal to the first grant, if a man show himself neither dejected nor discontented. "Iniquum petas, ut æquum feras,"** is a good rule, where a man hath

* Referees. † Disgusted.

‡ Giving no false color to the degree of success which has attended the prosecution of the suit.

§ To have little effect. ‖ To this extent.

¶ Of the information.

** "Ask what is exorbitant, that you may obtain what is moderate."

strength of favor: but otherwise a man were better rise in his suit; for he that would have ventured at first to have lost the suitor, will not, in the conclusion, lose both the suitor and his own former favor. Nothing is thought so easy a request to a great person, as his letter; and yet, if it be not in a good cause, it is so much out of his reputation. There are no worse instruments than these general contrivers of suits: for they are but a kind of poison and infection to public proceedings.

L.—OF STUDIES.*

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring: for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business; for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one: but the general counsels, and the plots and marshaling of affairs come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth: to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar: they perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom, without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and

* This formed the first Essay in the earliest edition of the work.

discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read but not curiously;* and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy† things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man; and, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtile; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend: "Abeunt studia in mores;"‡ nay, there is no stand or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies: like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises; bowling is good, for the stone and reins, shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head and the like; so if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again; if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find difference, let him study the schoolmen; for they are "Cymini sectores."§ If he be not apt to beat

* Attentively. † Vapid; without taste or spirit.

‡ "Studies become habits."

§ "Splitters of cummin-seeds;" or, as we now say, "splitters of straws," or "hairs." Butler says of Hudibras—

"He could distinguish and divide
A hair 'twixt south and south-west side."

over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases: so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

LI.—OF FACTION.

MANY have an opinion not wise, that for a prince to govern his estate, or for a great person to govern his proceedings, according to the respect of factions, is a principal part of policy; whereas, contrariwise, the chiefest wisdom is either, in ordering those things which are general, and wherein men of several factions do nevertheless agree, or in dealing with correspondence to particular persons, one by one: but I say not, that the consideration of factions is to be neglected. Mean men in their rising must adhere; but great men that have strength in themselves, were better to maintain themselves indifferent and neutral: yet even in beginners, to adhere so moderately, as he be a man of the one faction, which is most passable with the other, commonly giveth best way. The lower and weaker faction is the firmer in conjunction; and it is often seen, that a few that are stiff, do tire out a great number that are more moderate. When one of the factions is extinguished, the remaining subdivideth; as the faction between Lucullus and the rest of the nobles of the senate (which they called "optimates") held out a while against the faction of Pompey and Cæsar; but when the senate's authority was pulled down, Cæsar and Pompey soon after brake. The faction or party of Antonius and Octavianus Cæsar, against Brutus and Cassius, held out likewise for a time; but when Brutus and Cassius were overthrown, then soon after Antonius and Octavianus brake and subdivided. These examples are of wars,

but the same holdeth in private factions: and therefore, those that are seconds in factions, do many times, when the faction subdivideth, prove principals; but many times also they prove ciphers and cashiered; for many a man's strength is in opposition; and when that faileth, he groweth out of use. It is commonly seen, that men once placed, take in with the contrary faction to that by which they enter; thinking, belike, that they have the first sure, and now are ready for a new purchase. The traitor in faction lightly goeth away with it, for when matters have stuck long in balancing, the winning of some one man casteth them,* and he getteth all the thanks. The even carriage between two factions proceedeth not always of moderation, but of a trueness to a man's self, with end to make use of both. Certainly, in Italy, they hold it a little suspect in popes, when they have often in their mouth "Padre comune:"† and take it to be a sign of one that meaneth to refer all to the greatness of his own house. Kings had need beware how they side themselves and make themselves as of a faction or party; for leagues within the state are ever pernicious to monarchies; for they raise an obligation paramount to obligation of sovereignty, and make the king "tanquam unus ex nobis;"‡ as was to be seen in the League of France. When factions are carried too high and too violently, it is a sign of weakness in princes, and much to the prejudice both of their authority and business. The motions

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* Cause one side to preponderate.

† "The common of father."

‡ "As one of us." Henry III. of France, favoring the League formed by the Duke of Guise and Cardinal De Lorraine against the Protestants, soon found that through the adoption of that policy he had forfeited the respect of his subjects.

of factions under kings ought to be like the motions (as the astronomers speak) of the inferior orbs, which may have their proper motions, but yet still are quietly carried by the higher motion of "primum mobile."*

LII.—OF CEREMONIES AND RESPECTS.

He that is only real, had need have exceeding great parts of virtue; as the stone had need to be rich that is set without foil; but if a man mark it well, it is in praise and commendation of men, as it is in gettings and gains: for the proverb is true, "That light gains make heavy purses;" for light gains come thick, whereas great come but now and then: so it is true, that small matters win great commendation, because they are continually in use and in note: whereas the occasion of any great virtue cometh but on festivals; therefore it doth much add to a man's reputation, and is (as Queen Isabella † said) like perpetual letters commendatory, to have good forms; to attain them, it almost sufficeth not to despise them; for so shall a man observe them in others; and let him trust himself with the rest; for if he labor too much to express them, he shall lose their grace; which is to be natural and unaffected. Some men's behavior is like a verse, wherein every syllable is measured; how can a man comprehend great matters, that breaketh his mind too much to small observations? Not to use ceremonies at all is to teach others not to use them again; and so diminisheth respect to himself; especially they be not to be omitted to strangers and formal natures; but the dwelling upon them, and exalt-

* See a Note to Essay 15.

† Of Castile. She was the wife of Ferdinand of Arragon, and was the patroness of Columbus.

ing them above the moon, is not only tedious, but doth diminish the faith and credit of him that speaks; and, certainly, there is a kind of conveying of effectual and imprinting passages amongst compliments, which is of singular use, if a man can hit upon it. Amongst a man's peers, a man shall be sure of familiarity; and therefore it is good a little to keep state; amongst a man's inferiors, one shall be sure of reverence; and therefore it is good a little to be familiar. He that is too much in anything, so that he giveth another occasion of satiety, maketh himself cheap. To apply one's self to others is good; so it be with demonstration, that a man doth it upon regard, and not upon facility. It is a good precept, generally in seconding another, yet to add somewhat of one's own: as if you will grant his opinion, let it be with some distinction; if you will follow his motion, let it be with condition; if you allow his counsel, let it be with alleging further reason. Men had need beware how they be too perfect in compliments; for they be never so sufficient otherwise, their enviers will be sure to give them that attribute, to the disadvantage of their greater virtues. It is loss also in business to be too full of respects, or to be too curious in observing times and opportunities. Solomon saith, "He that considereth the wind shall not sow, and he that looketh to the clouds shall not reap."* A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. Men's behavior should be like their apparel, not too straight or point device,† but free for exercise or motion.

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* The words in our version are, "He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." —Ecclesiastes, xi. 4.

† Exact in the extreme. Point-de-vice was originally the name of a kind of lace of very fine pattern.

LIII.—OF PRAISE.

PRAISE is the reflection of virtue; but it is glass, or body, which giveth the reflection. If it be from the common people, it is commonly false and nought, and rather followeth vain persons than virtuous; for the common people understand not many excellent virtues: the lowest virtues draw praise from them, the middle virtues work in them astonishment or admiration; but of the highest virtues they have no sense or perceiving at all; but shows and "species virtutibus similes,"* serve best with them. Certainly, fame is like a river, that beareth up things light and swollen, and drowns things weighty and solid; but if persons of quality and judgment concur, then it is (as the Scripture saith), "Nomen bonum instar unguenti fragrantis:" † it filleth all round about, and will not easily away; for the odors of ointments are more durable than those of flowers. There be so many false points of praise, that a man may justly hold it a suspect. Some praises proceed merely of flattery; and if he be an ordinary flatterer, he will have certain common attributes, which may serve every man; if he be a cunning flatterer, he will follow the arch-flatterer, which is a man's self, and wherein a man thinketh best of himself, therein the flatterer will uphold him most: but if he be an impudent flatterer, look wherein a man is conscious to himself that he is most defective, and is most out of countenance in himself, that will the flatterer entitle him to, perforce, "spretâ

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* "Appearances resembling virtues."

† "A good name is like sweet-smelling ointment." The words in our version are, "A good name is better than precious ointment."—Ecclesiastes vii. 1.

conscientiâ."* Some praises come of good wishes and respects, which is a form due in civility to kings and great persons, "laudando præcipere;" † when by telling men what they are they represent to them what they should be; some men are praised maliciously to their hurt, thereby to stir envy and jealousy towards them; "Pessimum genus inimicorum laudantium;" ‡ insomuch as it was a proverb amongst the Grecians that, "he that was praised to his hurt, should have a push § rise upon his nose;" as we say, that a blister will rise upon one's tongue that tells a lie; certainly, moderate praise, used with opportunity, and not vulgar, is that which doth the good. Solomon saith, "He that praiseth his friend aloud, rising early, it shall be to him no better than a curse:" ‖ Too much magnifying of man or matter doth irritate contradiction, and procure envy and scorn. To praise a man's self cannot be decent, except it be in rare cases; but to praise a man's office ¶ or profession, he may do it with good grace, and with a kind of magnanimity. The cardinals of Rome, which are theologues,** and friars, and schoolmen, have a phrase of notable contempt and scorn towards civil business; for they call all temporal business of wars, embassages, judicature, and other employments, sbirrerie, which is under-sheriffries, as if they were but matters for under-sheriffs

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* "Disregarding *his own* conscience."

† "To instruct under the form of praise."

‡ "The worst kind of enemies are those who flatter."

§ A pimple filled with "pus," or "purulent matter." The word is still used in the east of England.

‖ The words in our version are, "He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him."—Proverbs xxvii. 14.

¶ In other words, to show what we call *esprit de corps*.

** Theologians.

and catchpoles; though many times those under-sheriffries do more good than their high speculations. St. Paul, when he boasts of himself, he doth oft interlace, "I speak like a fool;"* but speaking of his calling, he saith, "Magnificabo apostolatum meum."†

LIV.—OF VAIN GLORY.

It was prettily devised of Æsop, the fly sat upon the axle-tree of the chariot-wheel, and said, "What a dust do I raise!" So are there some vain persons, that whatsoever goeth alone, or moveth upon greater means, if they have never so little hand in it, they think it is they that carry it. They that are glorious must needs be factious; for all bravery‡ stands upon comparisons. They must needs be violent to make good their own vaunts; neither can they be secret, and therefore not effectual; but according to the French proverb "Beaucoup de bruit, peu de fruit;"—"much bruit,§ little fruit." Yet, certainly, there is use of this quality in civil affairs: where there is an opinion‖ and fame to be created, either of virtue or greatness, these men are good trumpeters. Again, as Titus Livius noteth, in the case of Antiochus and the Ætolians, there are sometimes great effects of cross lies; as if a man that negotiates between two princes, to draw them to join in a war

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* II. Cor. xi. 23.

† "I will magnify my apostleship." He alludes to the words in Romans xi. 13—"Inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office."

‡ Vaunting, or boasting.

§ Noise. We have a corresponding proverb—"Great cry and little wool."

‖ A high or good opinion.

against the third, doth extol the forces of either of them above measure, the one to the other: and sometimes he that deals between man and man, raiseth his own credit with both, by pretending greater interest than he hath in either; and in these, and the like kinds, it often falls out, that somewhat is produced of nothing; for lies are sufficient to breed opinion, and opinion brings on substance. In military commanders and soldiers, vain glory is an essential point; for as iron sharpens iron, so by glory, one ourcage sharpeneth another. In cases of great enterprise upon charge * and adventure, a composition of glorious natures doth put life into business; and those that are of solid and sober natures, have more of the ballast than of the sail. In fame of learning, the flight will be slow without some feathers of ostentation: "Qui de contemnendâ gloriâ libros scribunt, nomen suum inscribunt." † Socrates, Aristotle, Galen, were men full of ostentation: certainly, vain glory helpeth to perpetuate a man's memory; and virtue was never so beholden to human nature, as it received its due at the second hand. Neither had the fame of Cicero, Seneca, Plinius Secundus,‡ borne her age so well if it had not been joined with some vanity in themselves; like unto varnish, that makes ceilings not only shine,

* By express command.

† "Those who write books on despising glory set their names in the title-page." He quotes from Cicero's "Tusculanæ Disputationes," b.i c. 15, whose words are, "Quid nostri philosophi? Nonne in his libris ipsis, quos scribunt de contemnenda gloria, sua nomina inscribunt." "What do our philosophers do? Do they not, in those very books which they write on despising glory, set their names in the title-page?"

‡ Pliny the Younger, the nephew of the elder Pliny, the naturalist.

but last. But all this while, when I speak of vain glory, I mean not of that property that Tacitus doth attribute to Mucianus, "Omnium, quæ dixerat fecerat-que, arte quâdam ostentator:"* for that† proceeds not of vanity, but of natural magnanimity and discretion; and, in some persons, is not only comely, but gracious; for excusations,‡ cessions,§ modesty itself, well governed, are but arts of ostentation; and amongst those arts there is none better than that which Plinius Secundus speaketh of, which is to be liberal of praise and commendation to others, in that wherein a man's self hath any perfection: for, saith Pliny very wittily, "In commending another, you do yourself right; for he that you commend is either superior to you in that you commend, or inferior: if he be inferior, if he be to be commended, you much more; if he be superior, if he be not to be commended, you much less." Glorious‖ men are the scorn of wise men, the admiration of fools, the idols of parasites, and the slaves of their own vaunts.

LV.—OF HONOR AND REPUTATION.

The winning of honor is but the revealing of a man's virtue and worth without disadvantage; for some in their actions do woo and affect honor and reputation; which sort of men are commonly much talked of, but inwardly little admired: and some, contrari-

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*"One who set off everything he said and did with a certain skill." Mucianus was an intriguing general in the times of Otho and Vitellius.

†Namely, the property of which he was speaking, and not that mentioned by Tacitus.

‡Apologies. §Concessions. ‖Boastful.

wise, darken their virtue in the show of it; so as they be undervalued in opinion. If a man perform that which hath not been attempted before, or attempted and given over, or hath been achieved, but not with so good circumstance, he shall purchase more honor than by affecting a matter of greater difficulty or virtue, wherein he is but a follower. If a man so temper his actions, as in some one of them he doth content every faction or combination of people, the music will be the fuller. A man is an ill husband of his honor that entereth into any action, the failing wherein may disgrace him more than the carrying of it through can honor him. Honor that is gained and broken upon another hath the quickest reflection, like diamonds cut with facets; and therefore let a man contend to excel any competitors of his in honor, in outshooting them, if he can, in their own bow. Discreet followers and servants help much to reputation: "Omnis fama a domesticis emanat."* Envy, which is the canker of honor, is best extinguished by declaring a man's self in his ends, rather to seek merit than fame: and by attributing a man's successes rather to Divine providence and felicity, than to his own virtue or policy. The true marshalling of the degrees of sovereign honor are these: in the first place are "conditores imperiorum,"† founders of states and commonwealths; such as were Romulus, Cyrus, Cæsar, Ottoman,‡ Ismael: in the second place are "legisla-

* All fame emanates from servants."

† "Founders of empires."

‡ He alludes to Ottoman, or Othman I., the founder of the dynasty now reigning at Constantinople. From him the Turkish empire received the appellation of "Othoman," or "Ottoman," Porte.

tores," lawgivers; which are also called second founders, or "perpetui principes,"* because they govern by their ordinances after they are gone; such were Lycurgus, Solon, Justinian, Edgar,† Alphonsus of Castile the Wise, that made the "Siete Partidas:"‡ in the third place are "liberatores," or "salvatores,"§ such as compound the long miseries of civil wars, or deliver their countries from servitude of strangers or tyrants; as Augustus Cæsar, Vespasianus, Aurelianus, Theodoricus, King Henry the Seventh of England, King Henry the Fourth of France: in the fourth place are "propagatores," or "propugnatores imperii,"‖ such as in honorable wars enlarge their territories, or make noble defense against invaders; and, in the last place, are "patres patriæ,"¶ which reign justly and make the times good wherein they live; both which last kinds need no examples, they are in such number. Degrees of honor in subjects are, first, "participes curarum,"** those upon whom princes do discharge the greatest weight of their affairs; their right hands,

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* "Perpetual rulers."

† Surnamed the Peaceful, who ascended the throne of England A.D. 959. He was eminent as a legislator and a rigid assertor of justice. Hume considers his reign "one of the most fortunate that we meet with in the ancient English history."

‡ These were a general collection of the Spanish laws, made by Alphonso X. of Castile, arranged under their proper titles. The work was commenced by Don Ferdinand, his father, to put an end to the contradictory decisions in the Castilian courts of justice. It was divided into seven parts, whence its name "Siete Partidas." It did not, however, become the law of Castile till nearly eighty years after.

§ "Deliverers," or "presevers."

‖ "Extenders," or "defenders of the empire."

¶ "Fathers of their country."

** "Participators in cares."

as we call them; the next are "duces belli,"* great leaders; such as are princes' lieutenants, and do them notable services in the wars; the third are "gratiosi," favorites; such as exceed not this scantling,† to be solace to the sovereign, and harmless to the people: and the fourth, "negotiis pares;"‡ such as have great places under princes, and execute their places with sufficiency. There is an honor, likewise, which may be ranked amongst the greatest, which happeneth rarely; that is, of such as sacrifice themselves to death or danger for the good of their country; as was M. Regulus, and the two Decii.

LVI.—OF JUDICATURE.

JUDGES ought to remember that their office is "jus dicere,"§ and not "jus dare;"‖ to interpret law, and not to make law, or give law; else will it be like the authority claimed by the Church of Rome, which, under pretext of exposition of Scripture, doth not stick to add and alter, and to pronounce that which they do not find, and by show of antiquity to introduce novelty. Judges ought to be more learned than witty, more reverend than plausible, and more advised than confident. Above all things, integrity is their portion and proper virtue. "Cursed (with the law ¶) is he that removeth the landmark." The mislayer of a mere stone is to blame; but it is the unjust judge that is the capital remover of landmarks, when

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* "Leaders in war."

† Proportion, dimensions.

‡ "Equal to their duties."

§ "To expound the law."

‖ "To make the law."

¶ The Mosaic law. He alludes to Deuteronomy xxvii.—"Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor's landmark."

he defineth amiss of lands and property. One foul sentence doth more hurt than many foul examples; for these do but corrupt the stream, the other corrupteth the fountain: so saith Solomon, "Fons turbatus et vena corrupta est justus cadens in, causâ suâ coram adversario." * The office of judges may have reference unto the parties that sue, unto the advocates that plead, unto the clerks and ministers of justice underneath them, and to the sovereign or state above them.

First, for the causes or parties that sue. "There be (saith the Scripture) that turn judgment into wormwood;† and surely there be, also, that turn it into vineger; for injustice maketh it bitter, and delays make it sour. The principal duty of a judge is to suppress force and fraud; whereof force is the more pernicious when it is open, and fraud when it is close and disguised. Add thereto contentious suits, which ought to be spewed out, as the surfeit of courts. A judge ought to prepare his way to a just sentence, as God useth to prepare his way, by raising valleys and taking down hills: so when there appeareth on either side a high hand, violent prosecution, cunning advantages taken, combination, power, great counsel, then is the virtue of a judge seen to make inequality equal; that he may paint his judgment as upon an even ground. "Qui fortiter emungit, elicit sanguinem;"‡ and where the wine-press is hard wrought, it

* "A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain and a corrupt spring."—Proverbs xxv. 26.

† Amos v. 7—"Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth."

‡ "He who wrings the nose strongly brings blood." Proverbs xxx. 33—"Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so that the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife."

yields a harsh wine, that tastes of the grape-stone. Judges must beware of hard constructions, and strained inferences; for there is no worse torture than the torture of laws: especially in case of laws penal, they ought to have care that that which was meant for terror be not turned into rigor: and that they bring not upon the people that shower whereof the Scripture speaketh, "Pluet super eos laqueos;"* for penal laws pressed,† are a shower of snares upon the people: therefore let penal laws, if they have been sleepers of long, or if they be grown unfit for the present time, be by wise judges confined in the execution: "Judicis officium est, ut res, ita tempora rerum," etc.‡ In causes of life and death, judges ought (as far as the law permitteth) in justice to remember mercy, and to cast a severe eye upon the example, but a merciful eye upon the person.

Secondly, for the advocates and counsel that plead. Patience§ and gravity of hearing is an essential part of justice; and an overspeaking judge is no well-tuned cymbal. It is no grace to judge first to find that which he might have heard in due time from the bar; or to show quickness of conceit in cutting off evidence or counsel too short, or to prevent information by questions, though pertinent. The parts of a judge in hearing are four: to direct the evidence; to moderate length, repetition, or impertinency of speech; to recap-

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* "He will rain snares upon them." Psalm xi. 6—"Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest."

† Strained.

‡ "It is the duty of a judge to consider not only the facts but the circumstances of the case."

§ Pliny the Younger, Ep. B. 6, E. 2, has the observation—"Patientiam . . . quæ pars magna justitiæ est;"—"Patience, which is a great part of justice."

stulate, select, and collate the material points of that which hath been said; and to give the rule, or sentence. Whatsoever is above these is too much, and proceedeth either of glory, and willingness to speak, or of impatience to hear, or of shortness of memory, or of want of a staid and equal attention. It is a strange thing to see that the boldness of advocates should prevail with judges; whereas they should imitate God, in whose seat they sit, who represseth the presumptuous, and giveth grace to the modest: but it is more strange, that judges should have noted favorites, which cannot but cause multiplication of fees, and suspicion of by-ways. There is due from the judge to the advocate some commendation and gracing, where causes are well handled and fair pleaded, especially towards the side which obtaineth not;* for that upholds in the client the reputation of his counsel, and beats down in him the conceit† of his cause. There is likewise due to the public ε civil reprehension of advocates, where there appeareth cunning counsel, gross neglect, slight information, indiscreet pressing, or an over-bold defense; and let not the counsel at the bar chop‡ with the judge, nor wind himself into the handling of the cause anew after the judge hath declared his sentence; but, on the other side, let not the judge meet the cause half-way, nor give occasion to the party to say, his counsel or proofs were not heard.

Thirdly, for that that concerns clerks and ministers. The place of justice is a hallowed place; and therefore not only the bench but the foot-pace and precincts, and

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* Is not successful.

† Makes him to feel less confident of the goodness of his cause.

‡ Altercate, or bandy words with the judge.

purprise thereof ought to be preserved without scandal and corruption; for, certainly, "Grapes (as the Scripture saith) will not be gathered of thorns or thistles;"* neither can justice yield her fruit with sweetness amongst the briars and brambles of catching and polling clerks † and ministers. The attendance of courts is subject to four bad instruments: first, certain persons that are sower of suits, which make the court swell, and the country pine: the second sort is of both those that engage courts in quarrels or jurisdiction, and are not truly "amici curiæ,"‡ but "parasiti curiæ,"§ in puffing a court up beyond her bounds for their own scraps and advantage: the third sort is of those that may be accounted the left hands of courts: persons that are full of nimble and sinister tricks and shifts, whereby they pervert the plain and direct courses of courts, and bring justice into oblique lines and labyrinths: and the fourth is the poller and exacter of fees: which justifies the common resemblance of the courts of justice to the bush, whereunto while the sheep flies for defense in weather, he is sure to lose part of his fleece. On the other side, an ancient clerk, skilful in precedents, wary in proceeding, and understanding in the business of the court, is an excellent finger of a court, and doth many times point the way to the judge himself.

Fourthly, for that which may concern the sovereign and estate. Judges ought, above all, to remember the conclusion of the Roman Twelve Tables,‖ "Salus

* St. Matthew vii. 16—"Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles."

† Plundering. ‡ "Friends of the court."

§ "Parasites," or "flatterers of the court."

‖ Which were compiled by the Decemvirs.

populi suprema lex;"* and to know that laws, except they be in order to that end, are but things captious, and oracles not well inspired: therefore it is a happy thing in a state, when kings and states do often consult with judges; and again, when judges do often consult with the king and state: the one, when there is matter ot law intervenient in business of state; the other, when there is some consideration of state intervenient in matter of law; for many times the things deduced to judgment may be "meum"† and "tuum"‡ when the reason and consequence thereof may trench to point of estate: I call matter of estate, not only the parts of sovereignty, but whatsoever introduceth any great alteration, or dangerous precedent; or concerneth manifestly any great portion of people: and let no man weakly conceive that just laws and true policy have any antipathy; for they are like the spirits and sinews, that one moves with the other. Let judges also remember, that Solomon's throne was supported by lions§ on both sides: let them be lions, but yet lions under the throne: being circumspect that they do not check or oppose any points of sovereignty. Let not judges also be so ignorant of their own right, as to think there is not left to them, as a principal part of their office, a wise use and application of laws; for they may remember what the apostle saith of a greater law than theirs:

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* "The safety of the people is the supreme law."

† "Mine." ‡ "Yours."

§ He alludes to I Kings x. 19, 30—"The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind: and there were stays on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps." The same verses are repeated in I Chronicles ix. 18, 19.

"Nos scimus quia lex bona est, modo quis ea utatur legitime." *

LVII.—OF ANGER.

To seek to extinguish anger utterly is but a bravery † of the Stoics. We have better oracles: "Be angry, but sin not: let not the sun go down upon your anger." ‡ Anger must be limited and confined both in race and in time. We will speak first how the natural inclination and habit, "to be angry," may be tempered and calmed; secondly, how the particular motions of anger may be repressed, or, at least, refrained from doing mischief; thirdly, how to raise anger, or appease anger in another.

For the first, there is no other way but to meditate and ruminate well upon the effects of anger, how it troubles man's life: and the best time to do this, is to look back upon anger when the fit is thoroughly over. Seneca saith well, "that anger is like a ruin, which breaks itself upon that it falls." The Scripture exhorteth us "to possess our souls in patience;" § whosoever is out of patience, is out of possession of his soul. Men must not turn bees;

——"Animasque in vulnere ponunt." ‖

Anger is certainly a kind of baseness; as it appears

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* I Tim. i. 8—"We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully."

† A boast.

‡ Ephes. iv. 26. In our version it is thus rendered: "Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

§ "In your patience possess ye your souls." Luke xvi. 19.

‖ "And leave their lives in the wound." The quotation is from Virgil's Georgics, iv. 238.

well in the weakness of those subjects in whom it reigns: children, women, old folks, sick folks. Only men must beware that they carry their anger rather with scorn than with fear; so that they may seem rather to be above the injury than below it; which is a thing easily done, if a man will give law to himself in it.

For the second point, the causes and motives of anger are chiefly three: first, to be too sensible of hurt; for no man is angry that feels not himself hurt; and therefore tender and delicate persons must needs be oft angry, they have so many things to trouble them, which more robust natures have little sense of: the next is, the apprehension and construction of the injury offered, to be, in the circumstances thereof, full of contempt: for contempt is that which putteth an edge upon anger, as much, or more, than the hurt itself; and, therefore, when men are ingenious in picking out circumstances of contempt, they do kindle their anger much: lastly, opinion of the touch * of a man's reputation doth multiply and sharpen anger; wherein the remedy is, that a man should have, as Gonsalvo was wont to say, "Tclam honoris crassiorem." † But in all refrainings of anger, it is the best remedy to win time, and to make a man's self believe that the opportunity of his revenge is not yet come; but that he foresees a time for it, and so to still himself in the meantime, and reserve it.

To contain anger from mischief, though it take hold of a man, there be two things whereof you must have special caution: the one, of extreme bitterness of

* Susceptibility upon.

† "A thicker covering for his honor."

words, especially if they be aculeate and proper;* for "communia maledicta"† are nothing so much; and again, that in anger a man reveal no secrets; for that makes him not fit for society: the other that you do not peremptorily break off in any business in a fit of anger; but howsoever you show bitterness, do not act anything that is not revocable.

For raising and appeasing anger in another, it is done chiefly by choosing of times, when men are frowardest and worst disposed to incense them; again, by gathering (as we touched before) all that you can find out to aggravate the contempt; and the two remedies are by the contraries; the former to take good times, when first to relate to a man an angry business; for the first impression is much; and the other is, to sever, as much as may be, the construction of the injury from the point of contempt; imputing it to misunderstanding, fear, passion, or what you will.

LVIII.—OF VICISSITUDE OF THINGS.

Solomon saith, "There is no new thing upon the earth;"‡ so that as Plato§ had an imagination that all knowledge was but remembrance; so Solomon giveth his sentence, "That all novelty is but oblivion;"‖

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*Pointed and peculiarly appropriate to the party attacked.

†"Ordinary abuse."

‡Ecclesiastes i. 9, 10—"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be: and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already, of old time, which was before us."

§In his Phædo.

‖Ecclesiastes i. 11—"There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come hereafter."

whereby you may see, that the river of Lethe runneth as well above ground as below. There is an abstruse astrologer that saith, if it were not for two things that are constant (the one is, that the fixed stars ever stand at like distance one from another, and never come nearer together, nor go further asunder; the other, that the diurnal motion perpetually keepeth time), no individual would last one moment: certain it is, that the matter is in a perpetual flux, and never at a stay. The great winding-sheets that bury all things in oblivion are two; deluges and earthquakes. As for conflagrations and great droughts, they do not merely dispeople, but destroy. Phæton's car went but a day; and the three years' drought in the time of Elias,* was but particular,† and left people alive. As for the great burnings by lightnings, which are often in the West Indies,‡ they are but narrow; § but in the other two destructions, by deluge and earthquake, it is further to be noted, that the remnant of people which happen to be reserved, are commonly ignorant and mountainous people, that can give no account of the time past; so that the oblivion is all one as if none had been left. If you consider well of the people of the West Indies, it is very probable that they are a newer, or a younger

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*I Kings xvii. 1—"And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years but according to my word." I Kings xviii. 1—"And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab: and I will send rain upon the earth."

† Confined to a limited space.

‡ The whole of the continent of America then discovered is included under this name.

§ Limited.

people than the people of the old world; and it is much more likely that the destruction that hath heretofore been there, was not by earthquakes (as the Egyptian priest told Solon, concerning the island of Atlantis, that it was swallowed by an earthquake), but rather that it was desolated by a particular deluge; for earthquakes are seldom in those parts; but on the other side, they have such pouring rivers, as the rivers of Asia, and Africa, and Europe, are but brooks to them. Their Andes, likewise, or mountains, are far higher than those with us; whereby it seems, that the remnants of generation of men were in such a particular deluge saved. As for the observation that Machiavel hath, that the jealousy of sects doth much extinguish the memory of things; traducing Gregory the Great, that he did what in him lay to extinguish all heathen antiquities; I do not find that those zeals do any great effects, nor last long; as it appeared in the succession of Sabinian,* who did revive the former antiquities.

The vicissitude, or mutations, in the superior globe, are no fit matter for this present argument. It may be, Plato's great year,† if the world should last so long, would have some effect, not in renewing the state of like individuals (for that is the fume‡ of those that conceive the celestial bodies have more accurate influences upon these things below, than indeed they have),

* Sabinianus of Volaterra was elected bishop of Rome on the death of Gregory the Great, A.D. 604. He was of an avaricious disposition, and thereby incurred the popular hatred. He died in eighteen months after his election.

† This Cicero speaks of as "the great year of the mathematicians." "On the Nature of the Gods," B. 4, ch. 20. By some it was supposed to occur after a period of 12,954 years, while according to others, it was of 25,920 years' duration.

‡ Conceit.

but in gross. Comets, out of question, have likewise power and effect over the gross and mass of things; but they are rather gazed, and waited upon * in their journey, than wisely observed in their effects; especially in their respective effects; that is, what kind of comet for magnitude, color, version of the beams, placing in the region of heaven, or lasting, produceth what kind of effects.

There is a toy,† which I have heard, and I would not have it given over, but waited upon a little. They say it is observed in the Low Countries (I know not in what part), that every five and thirty years the same kind and suit of years and weather comes about again; as great frosts, great wet, great droughts, warm winters, summers with little heat, and the like; and they call it the prime; it is a thing I do the rather mention, because, computing backwards, I have found some concurrence.

But to leave these points of nature, and to come to men. The greatest vicissitude of things amongst men, is the vicissitude of sects and religions: for those orbs rule in men's minds most. The true religion is built upon the rock; the rest are tossed upon the waves of time. To speak, therefore, of the causes of new sects, and to give some counsel concerning them, as far as the weakness of human judgment can give stay to so great revolutions.

When the religion formerly received is rent by discords, and when the holiness of the professors of religion is decayed and full of scandal, and withal the times be stupid, ignorant, and barbarous, you may doubt the springing up of a new sect; if then also there

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* Observed. † A curious fancy or odd conceit.

should arise any extravagant and strange spirit to make himself author thereof; all which points held when Mahomet published his law. If a new sect have not two properties, fear it not, for it will not spread: the one is the supplanting or the opposing of authority established; for nothing is more popular than that; the other is the giving license to pleasures and a voluptuous life: for as for speculative heresies (such as were in ancient times the Arians, and now the Arminians),* though they work mightily upon men's wits, yet they do not produce any great alterations in states: except it be by the help of civil occasions. There be three manner of plantations of new sects: by the power of signs and miracles: by the eloquence and wisdom of speech and persuasion; and by the sword. For martyrdoms, I reckon them amongst miracles, because they seem to exceed the strength of human nature; and I may do the like of superlative and admirable holiness of life. Surely there is no better way to stop the rising of new sects and schisms, than to reform abuses; to compound the smaller differences; to proceed mildly, and not with sanguinary persecutions; and rather to take off the principal authors, by winning and advancing them, than to enrage them by violence and bitterness.

The changes and vicissitude in wars are many; but chiefly in three things: in the seats or stages of the war, in the weapons, and in the manner of the conduct. Wars, in ancient time, seemed more to move from east to west; for the Persians, Assyrians, Arabians, Tartars

* The followers of Arminius, or James Harmensen, a celebrated divine of the 16th and 17th centuries. Though called a heresy by Bacon, his opinions have been for two centuries, and still are, held by a large portion of the Church of England.

(which were the invaders), were all eastern people. It is true, the Gauls were western; but we read but of two incursions of theirs: the one to Gallo-Græcia, the other to Rome: but east and west have no certain points of heaven; and no more have the wars, either from the east or west, any certainty of observation; but north and south are fixed; and it hath seldom or never been seen that the far southern people have invaded the northern, but contrariwise; whereby it is manifest that the northern tract of the world is in nature the more martial region: be it in respect of the stars of that hemisphere,* or of the great continents that are upon the north; whereas the south part, for aught that is known, is almost all sea; or (which is most apparent) of the cold of the northern parts, which is that which, without aid of discipline, doth make the bodies hardest, and the courage warmest.

Upon the breaking and shivering of a great state and empire, you may be sure to have wars: for great empires, while they stand, do enervate and destroy the forces of the natives which they have subdued, resting upon their own protecting forces; and then, when they fail also all goes to ruin, and they become a prey; so was it in the decay of the Roman empire, and likewise in the empire of Almaigne,† after Charles the Great,‡ every bird taking a feather; and were not unlike to befall to Spain, if it should break. The great accessions and unions of kingdoms do likewise stir up wars: for when a state grows to an over-power, it is like a great flood, that will be sure to overflow; as it hath

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* A belief in astrology, or at least the influences of the stars, was almost universal in the time of Bacon.

† Germany. ‡ Charlemagne.

been seen in the states of Rome, Turkey, Spain, and others. Look when the world hath fewest barbarous people, but such as commonly will not marry, or generate, except they know means to live (as it is almost everywhere at this day, except Tartary), there is no danger of inundations of people; but when there be great shoals of people, which go on to populate, without foreseeing means of life and sustentation, it is of necessity that once in an age or two they discharge a portion of their people upon other nations, which the ancient northern people were wont to do by lot; casting lots what part should stay at home, and what should seek their fortunes. When a warlike state grows soft and effeminate, they may be sure of a war: for commonly such states are grown rich in the time of their degenerating: and so the prey inviteth, and their decay in valor encourageth a war.

As for the weapons, it hardly falleth under rule and observation: yet we see even they have returns and vicissitudes; for certain it is, that ordnance was known in the city of the Oxidraces, in India; and was that which the Macedonians* called thunder and lightning, and magic; and it is well known that the use of ordnance hath been in China above two thousand years. The conditions of weapons, and their improvements are, first, the fetching† afar off; for that outruns the danger, as it is seen in ordnance and muskets; secondly, the strength of the percussion, wherein likewise ordnance do exceed all arietations,‡ and ancient inventions; the third is, the commodious use of them in

* When led thither by Alexander the Great.

† Striking.

‡ Application of the "aries," or battering-ram.

that may serve in all weathers, that the carriage may be light and manageable, and the like.

For the conduct of the war: at the first, men rested extremely upon number; they did put the wars likewise upon main force and valor, pointing days for pitched fields, and so trying it out upon an even match; and they were more ignorant in ranging and arraying their battles. After they grew to rest upon number, rather competent than vast, they grew to advantages of place, cunning diversions, and the like, and they grew more skilful in the ordering of their battles.

In the youth of a state, arms do flourish; in the middle age of a state, learning; and then both of them together for a time; in the declining age of a state, mechanical arts and merchandise. Learning hath its infancy when it is but beginning, and almost childish; then its youth, when it is luxuriant and juvenile; then its strength of years, when it is solid and reduced; and, lastly, its old age, when it waxeth dry and exhaust; but it is not good to look too long upon these turning wheels of vicissitude, lest we become giddy: as for the philology of them, that is but a circle of tales, and therefore not fit for this writing.

A FRAGMENT OF AN ESSAY OF FAME.*

The poets make Fame a monster: they describe her in part finely and elegantly, and in part gravely and sententiously; they say, Look how many feathers she hath, so many eyes she hath underneath, so many tongues, so many voices, she pricks up so many ears.

This is a flourish; there follow excellent parables·

*This fragment was found among Lord Bacon's papers, and published by Dr. Rawley.

as that she gathereth strength in going; that she goeth upon the ground, and yet hideth her head in the clouds; that in the day-time she sitteth in a watch-tower, and flieth most by night; that she mingleth things done with things not done; and that she is a terror to great cities; but that which passeth all the rest is, they do recount that the earth, mother of the giants that made war against Jupiter, and were by him destroyed, thereupon in anger brought forth Fame; for certain it is, that rebels, figured by the giants, and seditious fames and libels are but brothers and sisters, masculine and feminine; but now if a man can tame this monster, and bring her to feed at the hand and govern her, and with her fly other ravening fowl, and kill them, it is somewhat worth: but we are infected with the style of the poets. To speak now in a sad and serious manner, there is not in all the politics a place less handled, and more worthy to be handled, than this of fame. We will therefore speak of these points: what are false fames, and what are true fames, and how they may be best discerned; how fames may be sown and raised; how they may be spread and multiplied; and how they may be checked and laid dead; and other things concerning the nature of fame. Fame is of that force, as there is scarcely any great action wherein it hath not a great part, especially in the war. Mucianus undid Vitellius by a fame that he scattered, that Vitellius had in purpose to remove the legions of Syria into Germany, and the legions of Germany into Syria; whereupon the legions of Syria were infinitely inflamed. Julius Cæsar took Pompey unprovided, and laid asleep his industry and preparations by a fame that he cunningly gave out, how Cæsar's own soldiers loved him not; and being wearied with the wars, and

laden with the spoils of Gaul, would forsake him as soon as he came into Italy. Livia settled all things for the succession of her son Tiberius, by continually giving out that her husband Augustus was upon recovery and amendment; and it is a usual thing with the bashaws to conceal the death of the Grand Turk from the janizaries and men of war, to save the sacking of Constantinople, and other towns, as their manner is. Themistocles made Xerxes, king of Persia, post apace out of Græcia, by giving out that the Grecians had a purpose to break his bridge of ships which he had made athwart Hellespont. There be a thousand such like examples, and the more they are, the less they need to be repeated, because a man meeteth with them everywhere: therefore let all wise governors have as great a watch and care over fames, as they have of the actions and designs themselves.

OF A KING.

1. A KING is a mortal God on earth, unto whom the living God hath lent his own name as a great honor; but withal told him, he should die like a man, least he should be proud and flatter himself, that God hath, with his name, imparted unto him his nature also.

2. Of all kind of men, God is the least beholden unto them; for he doth most for them, and they do, ordinarily, least for him.

3. A king that would not feel his crown too heavy for him, must wear it every day; but if he think it too light, he knoweth not of what metal it is made.

4. He must make religion the rule of government, and not to balance the scale; for he that casteth in religion only to make the scales even, his own weight is con-

tained in those characters: "Mene, mene, tekel, uphar sin: He is found too light, his kingdom shall be taken from him."

5. And that king that holds not religion the best reason of state, is void of all piety and justice, the supporters of a king.

6. He must be able to give counsel himself, but not rely thereupon; for though happy events justify their counsels, yet it is better that the evil event of good advice be rather imputed to a subject than a sovereign.

7. He is the fountain of honor, which should not run with a waste-pipe, least the courtiers sell the water, and then, as Papists say of their holy wells, it loses the virtue.

8. He is the life of the law, not only as he is *Lex loquens* himself, but because he animateth the dead letter, making it active towards all his subjects *præmio et pœna.*

9. A wise king must do less in altering his laws than he may; for new government is ever dangerous. It being true in the body politic, as in the corporal, that *omnis subita immutatio est periculosa;* and though it be for the better, yet it is not without a fearful apprehension; for he that changeth the fundamental laws of a kingdom, thinketh there is no good title to a crown, but by conquest.

10. A king that setteth to sale seats of justice, oppresseth the people; for he teacheth his judges to sell justice, and *pretio porata pretio venditur justitia.*

11. Bounty and magnificence are virtues very regal, but a prodigal king is nearer a tyrant than a parsimonious; for store at home draweth not his contemplations abroad, but want supplieth itself of what is next, and

many times the next way. A king therein must be wise, and know what he may justly do.

12. That king which is not feared, is not loved; and he that is well seen in his craft, must as well study to be feared as loved; yet not loved for fear, but feared for love.

13. Therefore, as he must always resemble Him whose great name he beareth, and that as in manifesting the sweet influence of his mercy on the severe stroke of his justice sometimes, so in this not to suffer a man of death to live; for, besides that the land doth mourn, the restraint of justice towards sin doth more retard the affection of love, than the extent of mercy doth inflame it; and sure, where love is [ill] bestowed, fear is quite lost.

14. His greatest enemies are his flatterers; for though they ever speak on his side, yet their words still make against him.

15. The love which a king oweth to a weal public should not be overstrained to any one particular; yet that his more especial favor do reflect upon some worthy ones, is somewhat necessary, because there are few of that capacity.

16. He must have a special care of five things, if he would not have his crown to be but to him *infelix felicitas*.

First, that *simulata sanctitas* be not in the church; for that is *dupex iniquitas*.

Secondly, that *inutilis æquitas* set not in the chancery; for that is *inepta misericordia*.

Thirdly, that *utilis iniquitas* keep not the exchequer; for that is *crudele latrocinium*.

Fourthly, that *fidelis temeritas* be not his general, for that would bring but *seram pœnitentiam*.

Fifthly, that *infidelis prudentia* be not his secretary; for that is *anguis sub viridi herba.*

To conclude: as he is of the greatest power, so he is subject to the greatest cares, made the servant of his people, or else he were without a calling at all.

He, then, that honoreth him not is next an atheist, wanting the fear of God in his heart.

ON DEATH.

1. I HAVE often thought upon death, and I find it the least of all evils. All that which is past is as a dream; and he that hopes or depends upon time coming, dreams waking. So much of our life as we have discovered is already dead; and all those hours which we share, even from the breasts of our mothers, until we return to our grandmother the earth, are part of our dying days, whereof even this is one, and those that succeed are of the same nature, for we die daily; and as others have given place to us, so we must in the end give way t others

2. Physicians in the name of death include all sor row, anguish, disease, calamity, or whatsoever can fall in the life of man, either grievous or unwelcome. But these things are familiar unto us, and we suffer them every hour; therefore we die daily, and I am older since I affirmed it.

3. I know many wise men that fear to die; for the change is bitter, and flesh would refuse to prove it: besides, the expectation brings terror, and that exceeds the evil. But I do not believe that any man fears to be dead, but only the stroke of death; and such are my hopes, that if heaven be pleased, and nature renew but my lease for twenty-one years more. without asking

longer days, I shall be strong enough to acknowledge without mourning, that I was begotten mortal. Virtue walks not in the highway, though she go per alta; this is strength and the blood to virtue, to contemn things that be desired, and to neglect that which is feared.

4. Why should man be in love with his fetters, though of gold? Art thou drowned in security? Then I say thou art perfectly dead. For though thou movest, yet thy soul is buried within thee, and thy good angel either forsakes his guard or sleeps. There is nothing under heaven, saving a true friend (who cannot be counted within the number of movables), unto which my heart doth lean. And this dear freedom hath begotten me this peace, that I mourn not for that end which must be, nor spend one wish to have one minute added to the uncertain date of my years. It was no mean apprehension of Lucian, who says of Menippus, that in his travels through hell, he knew not the kings of the earth from the other men but only by their louder cryings and tears, which were fostered in them through the remorseful memory of the good days they had seen, and the fruitful havings which they so unwillingly left behind them: he that was well seated, looked back at his portion, and was loth to forsake his farm; and others, either minding marriages, pleasures, profit or preferment, desired to be excused from death's banquet: they had made an appointment with earth, looking at the blessings, not the hand that enlarged them, forgetting how unclothedly they came hither, or with what naked ornaments they were arrayed.

5. But were we servants of the precept given, and observers of the heathens' rule, memento mori, and not become benighted with this seeming felicity, we should enjoy it as men prepared to lose, and not wind up our

thoughts upon so perishing a fortune: he that is not slackly strong (as the servants of pleasure), how can he be found unready to quit the veil and false visage of his perfection? The soul having shaken off her flesh, doth then set up for herself, and contemning things that are under, shows what finger hath enforced her; for the souls of idiots are of the same piece with those of statesman, but now and then nature is at a fault, and this good guest of ours takes soil in an imperfect body, and so is slackened from showing her wonders, like an excellent musician which cannot utter himself upon a defective instrument.

6. But see how I am swerved, and lose my course, touching at the soul that doth least hold action with death, who hath the surest property in this frail act; his style is the end of all flesh, and the beginning of incorruption.

This ruler of monuments leads men for the most part out of this world with their heels forward, in token that he is contrary to life, which being obtained, sends men headlong into this wretched theatre, where being arrived, their first language is that of mourning. Nor in my own thoughts, can I compare men more fitly to anything than to the Indian fig-tree, which, being ripened to his full height, is said to decline his branches down to the earth, whereof she conceives again, and they become roots in their own stock.

So man, having derived his being from the earth, first lives the life of a tree, drawing his nourishment as a plant, and made ripe for earth, he tends downwards, and is sowed again in his mother the earth, where he perisheth not, but expects a quickening.

7. So we see death exempts not a man from being, but only presents an alteration; yet there are some men

(I think) that stand otherwise persuaded. Death finds not a worse friend than an alderman, to whose door I never knew him welcome; but he is an importunate guest, and will not be said nay.

And though they themselves shall affirm that they are not within, yet the answer will not be taken; and that which heightens their fear is, that they know they are in danger to forfeit their flesh, but are not wise of the payment-day, which sickly uncertainty is the occasion that (for the most part) they step out of this world unfurnished for their general account, and being all unprovided, desire yet to hold their gravity, preparing their souls to answer in scarlet.

Thus I gather, that death is unagreeable to most citizens, because they commonly die intestate; this being a rule, that when their will is made, they think themselves nearer a grave than before: now they, out of the wisdoms of thousands, think to scare destiny, from which there is no appeal, by not making a will, or to live longer by protestation of their unwillingness to die. They are for the most part well made in this world (accounting their treasure by legions, as men do devils): their fortune looks toward them, and they are willing to anchor at it, and desire (if it be possible) to put the evil day far off from them, and to adjourn their ungrateful and killing period.

No, these are not the men which have bespoken death, or whose looks are assured to entertain a thought of him.

8. Death arrives gracious only to such as sit in darkness, or lie heavy burthened with grief and irons; to the poor Christian, that sits bound in the galley; to despairful widows, pensive prisoners, and deposed kings; to them whose fortune runs back, and whose

spirits mutiny: unto such death is a redeemer, and the grave a place for retiredness and rest.

These wait upon the shore of death, and waft unto him to draw near, wishing above all others to see his star, that they might be led to his place; wooing the remorseless sisters to wind down the watch of their life, and to break them off before the hour.

9. But death is a doleful messenger to a usurer, and fate untimely cuts their thread; for it is never mentioned by him, but when rumors of war, and civil tumults put him in mind thereof.

And when many hands are armed, and the peace of a city in disorder, and the foot of the common soldiers sounds an alarm on his stairs, then perhaps such a one (broken in thoughts of his moneys abroad, and cursing the monuments of coin which are in his house) can be content to think of death, and (being hasty of perdition) will perhaps hang himself, lest his throat should be cut; provided that he may do it in his study, surrounded with wealth, to which his eye sends a faint and languishing salute, even upon the turning off; remembering always, that he have time and liberty, by writing, to depute himself as his own heir.

For that is a great peace to his end, and reconciles him wonderfully upon the point.

10. Herein we all dally with ourselves, and are without proof of necessity. I am not of those, that dare promise to pine away myself in vain glory, and I hold such to be but feat boldness, and them that dare commit it, to be vain. Yet for my part, I think nature should do me great wrong, if I should be so long in dying, as I was in being born.

To speak truth, no man knows the lists of his own patience; nor can divine how able he shall be in his

THE CONDUCT

OF

THE UNDERSTANDING.

BY

JOHN LOCKE, Esq.

NEW YORK:
JOHN B. ALDEN, Publisher.
1885.

I cannot think any parent or instructor justified in neglecting to put this little treatise (Conduct of the Understanding) in the hands of a boy about the time when the reasoning faculties become developed. It will give him a sober and serious, not flippant or self-conceited, independency of thinking, and, while it teaches how to distrust ourselves, and to watch those prejudices which necessarily grow up from one cause or another, will inspire a reasonable confidence in what has been well considered.

HENRY HALLAM.

TROW'S
PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY,
NEW YORK.

THE

CONDUCT OF THE UNDERSTANDING.

SECT. I.—INTRODUCTION.

THE last resort a man has recourse to in the conduct of himself is his understanding; for, though we distinguish the faculties of the mind, and give the supreme command to the will, as to an agent, yet the truth is, the man which is the agent determines himself to this or that voluntary action, upon some precedent knowledge, or appearance of knowledge, in the understanding. No man ever sets himself about anything but upon some view or other, which serves him for a reason for what he does: and whatsoever faculties he employs, the understanding, with such light as it has, well or ill informed, constantly leads; and by that light, true or false, all his operative powers are directed. The will itself, how absolute and uncontrollable soever it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the understanding. Temples have their sacred images, and we see what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind. But, in truth, the ideas and images in men's minds are the visible powers that constantly govern them, and to these they all universally pay a ready submission. It is therefore of the highest concernment that great care should be taken of the understanding, to conduct it right in the search of knowledge, and in the judgments it makes.

The logic now in use has so long possessed the

chair, as the only art taught in the schools for the direction of the mind in the study of the arts and sciences, that it would perhaps be thought an affectation of novelty to suspect that rules that have served the learned world these two or three thousand years, and which, without any complaint of defect, the learned have rested in, are not sufficient to guide the understanding. And I should not doubt but this attempt would be censured as vanity or presumption, did not the great Lord Verulam's authority justify it: who, not servilely thinking learning could not be advanced beyond what it was, because for many ages it had not been, did not rest in the lazy approbation and applause of what was because it was, but enlarged his mind to what might be. In his preface to his Novum Organum, concerning logic he pronounces thus: "Qui summas dialecticæ partes tribuerunt, atque inde fidissima scientiis præsidia comparari putarunt, verissime et optime viderunt intellectum humanum sibi permissum merito suspectum esse debere. Verum infirmior omnino est malo medicina; nec ipsa mali expers. Siquidem dialectica, quæ recepta est licet ad civilia et artes, quæ in sermone et opinione positæ sunt, rectissime adhibeatur; naturæ tamen subtilitatem longo intervallo non attingit, et prænsando, quod non capit, ad errores potius stabiliendos et quasi figendos quam ad viam veritati aperiendam valuit."

They, says he, who attributed so much to logic, perceived very well, and truly, that it was not safe to trust the understanding to itself, without the guard of any rules. But the remedy reached not the evil, but became a part of it; for the logic which took place, though it might do well enough in civil affairs, and the arts which consisted in talk and opinion, yet comes very far short of subtilty in the real performances of nature; and, catching at what it cannot reach, has served to confirm and establish errors rather than to open a way to truth. And, therefore, a little after he says that it is absolutely necessary that a better and

perfecter use and employment of the mind and understanding should be introduced: "Necessario requiritur ut melior et perfectior mentis et intellectus humani usus et adoperatio introducatur."

SECT. II.—PARTS.

THERE is, it is visible, great variety in men's understandings, and their natural constitutions put so wide a difference between some men in this respect, that art and industry would never be able to master; and their very natures seem to want a foundation to raise on it that which other men easily attain unto. Among men of equal education there is a great inequality of parts. And the woods of America, as well as the schools of Athens, produce men of several abilities in the same kind. Though this be so, yet I imagine most men come very short of what they might attain unto in their several degrees, by a neglect of their understandings. A few rules of logic are thought sufficient in this case for those who pretend to the highest improvement; whereas I think there are a great many natural defects in the understanding capable of amendment, which are overlooked and wholly neglected. And it is easy to perceive that men are guilty of a great many faults in the exercise and improvement of this faculty of the mind, which hinder them in their progress, and keep them in ignorance and error all their lives. Some of them I shall take notice of, and endeavor to point out proper remedies for, in the following discourse.

SECT. III.—REASONING.

BESIDES the want of determined ideas, and of sagacity and exercise in finding out and laying in order intermediate ideas, there are three miscarriages that men are guilty of in reference to their reason, where-

by this faculty is hindered in them from that service it might do and was designed for. And he that reflects upon the actions and discourses of mankind will find their defects in this kind very frequent and very observable.

1. The first is of those who seldom reason at all, but do and think according to the example of others, whether parents, neighbors, ministers, or who else they are pleased to make choice of to have an implicit faith in, for the saving of themselves the pains and trouble of thinking and examining for themselves.

2. The second is of those who put passion in the place of reason, and, being resolved that shall govern their actions and arguments, neither use their own, nor hearken to other people's reason any farther than it suits their humor, interest, or party; and these, one may observe, commonly content themselves with words which have no distinct ideas to them, though in other matters that they come with an unbiassed indifferency to, they want not abilities to talk and hear reason, where they have no secret inclination that hinders them from being untractable to it.

3. The third sort is of those who readily and sincerely follow reason, but for want of having that which one may call large, sound, round-about sense, have not a full view of all that relates to the question, and may be of moment to decide it. We are all short-sighted, and very often see but one side of the matter: our views are not extended to all that has a connection with it. From this defect I think no man is free. We see but in part, and we know but in part, and therefore it is no wonder we conclude not right from our partial views. This might instruct the proudest esteemer of his own parts how useful it is to talk and consult with others, even such as come short of him in capacity, quickness, and penetration; for, since no one sees all, and we generally have different prospects of the same thing, according to our different, as I may say, positions to it, it is not incongruous to think, nor beneath any man to try, whether another may not have notions of

things which have escaped him, and which his reason would make use of if they came into his mind. The faculty of reasoning seldom or never deceives those who trust to it; its consequences from what it builds on are evident and certain, but that which it oftenest, if not only, misleads us in, is, that the principles from which we conclude, the grounds upon which we bottom our reasoning, are but a part; something is left out which should go into the reckoning to make it just and exact. Here we may imagine a vast and almost infinite advantage that angels and separate spirits may have over us, who, in their several degrees of elevation above us, may be endowed with more comprehensive faculties: and some of them, perhaps, have perfect and exact views of all finite beings that come under their consideration; can, as it were in the twinkling of an eye, collect together all their scattered and almost boundless relations. A mind so furnished, what reason has it to acquiesce in the certainty of its conclusions!

In this we may see the reason why some men of study and thought, that reason right and are lovers of truth, do make no great advances in their discoveries of it. Error and truth are uncertainly blended in their minds; their decisions are lame and defective, and they are very often mistaken in their judgments: the reason whereof is, they converse with but one sort of men, they read but one sort of books, they will not come in the hearing but of one sort of notions; the truth is, they canton out to themselves a little Goshen in the intellectual world, where light shines, and, as they conclude, day blesses them; but the rest of that vast expansum they give up to night and darkness, and so avoid coming near it. They have a petty traffic with known correspondents in some little creek: within that they confine themselves, and are dexterous managers enough of the wares and products of that corner with which they content themselves, but will not venture out into the great ocean of knowledge, to survey the riches that nature hath stored other parts with, no

less genuine, no less solid, no less useful, than what has fallen to their lot in the admired plenty and sufficiency of their own little spot, which to them contains whatever is good in the universe. Those who live thus mewed up within their own contracted territories, and will not look abroad beyond the boundaries that chance, conceit, or laziness has set to their inquiries, but live separate from the notions, discourses, and attainments of the rest of mankind, may not amiss be represented by the inhabitants of the Marian Islands, which, being separate by a large tract of sea from all communion with the habitable parts of the earth, thought themselves the only people of the world. And though the straitness and conveniences of life among them had never reached so far as to the use of fire, till the Spaniards, not many years since, in their voyages from Acapulco to Manilla brought it among them; yet, in the want and ignorance of almost all things, they looked upon themselves, even after that the Spaniards had brought among them the notice of variety of nations abounding in sciences, arts, and conveniences of life of which they knew nothing, they looked upon themselves, I say, as the happiest and wisest people in the universe. But, for all that, nobody, I think, will imagine them deep naturalists or solid metaphysicians; nobody will deem the quickest-sighted among them to have very enlarged views in ethics or politics; nor can any one allow the most capable among them to be advanced so far in his understanding as to have any other knowledge but of the few little things of his and the neighboring islands within his commerce; but far enough from that comprehensive enlargement of mind which adorns a soul devoted to truth, assisted with letters, and a free consideration of the several views and sentiments of thinking men of all sides. Let not men, therefore, that would have a sight of what every one pretends to, desirous to have a sight of truth in its full extent, be yet narrow and blind in their own prospect. Let not men think there is no truth but in the sciences that they study or the books that they

read. To prejudge other men's notions before we have looked into them is not to show their darkness, but to put out our own eyes. *Try all things, hold fast that which is good*, is a Divine rule, coming from the Father of light and truth : and it is hard to know what other way men can come at truth, to lay hold of it, if they do not dig and search for it as for gold and hid treasure; but he that does so must have much earth and rubbish before he gets the pure metal : sand, and pebbles, and dross usually lie blended with it, but the gold is nevertheless gold, and will enrich the man that employs his pains to seek and separate it. Neither is there any danger he should be deceived by the mixture. Every man carries about him a touchstone if he will make use of it, to distinguish substantial gold from superficial glittering, truth from appearances. And indeed the use and benefit of this touchstone, which is natural reason, is spoiled and lost only by assumed prejudices, overweening presumption, and narrowing our minds. The want of exercising it in the full extent of things intelligible, is that which weakens and extinguishes this noble faculty in us. Trace it, and see whether it be not so. The day-laborer in a country village has commonly but a small pittance of knowledge, because his ideas and notions have been confined to the narrow bounds of a poor conversation and employment. The low mechanic of a country town does somewhat outdo him ; porters and cobblers of great cities surpass them. A country gentleman, who, leaving Latin and learning in the University, removes thence to his mansion-house, and associates with neighbors of the same strain, who relish nothing but hunting and a bottle ; with those alone he spends his time, with those alone he converses, and can away with no company whose discourse goes beyond what claret and dissoluteness inspire. Such a patriot, formed in this happy way of improvement, cannot fail, as we see, to give notable decisions upon the bench of quarter-sessions, and eminent proofs of his skill in politics, when the strength of his purse and party have advanced

him to a more conspicuous station. To such a one, truly, an ordinary coffee-house gleaner of the city is an arrant statesman, and as much superior to, as a man conversant about Whitehall and the court is to an ordinary shop-keeper. To carry this a little farther: Here is one muffled up in the zeal and infallibility of his own sect, and will not touch a book or enter into debate with a person that will question any of those things which to him are sacred. Another surveys our differences in religion with an equitable and fair indifference, and so finds probably that none of them are in everything unexceptionable. These divisions and systems were made by men, and carry the mark of fallible on them; and in those whom he differs from, and till he opened his eyes had a general prejudice against, he meets with more to be said for a great many things than before he was aware of or could have imagined. Which of these two, now, is most likely to judge right in our religious controversies, and to be most stored with truth, the mark all pretend to aim at? All these men that I have instanced in, thus unequally furnished with truth and advanced in knowledge, I suppose of equal natural parts; all the odds between them has been the different scope that has been given to their understandings to range in, for the gathering up of information, and furnishing their heads with ideas, notions, and observations whereon to employ their minds and form their understandings.

It will possibly be objected, Who is sufficient for all this? I answer, more than can be imagined. Every one knows what his proper business is, and what, according to the character he makes of himself, the world may justly expect of him; and to answer that, he will find he will have time and opportunity enough to furnish himself, if he will not deprive himself, by a narrowness of spirit, of those helps that are at hand. I do not say, to be a good geographer that a man should visit every mountain, river, promontory, and creek, upon the face of the earth, view the buildings and survey the land everywhere, as if he were going to

make a purchase. But yet every one must allow that he shall know the country better that makes often sallies into it, and traverses it up and down, than he that like a mill-horse goes still round in the same tract, or keeps within the narrow bounds of a field or two that delight him. He that will inquire out the best books in every science, and inform himself of the most material authors of the several sects of philosophy and religion, will not find it an infinite work to acquaint himself with the sentiments of mankind concerning the most weighty and comprehensive subjects. Let him exercise the freedom of his reason and understanding in such a latitude as this, and his mind will be strengthened, his capacity enlarged, his faculties improved; and the light which the remote and scattered parts of truth will give to one another will so assist his judgment, that he will seldom be widely out, or miss giving proof of a clear head and a comprehensive knowledge. At least this is the only way I know to give the understanding its due improvement to the full extent of its capacity, and to distinguish the two most different things I know in the world, a logical chicaner from a man of reason. Only he that would thus give the mind its flight, and send abroad his inquiries into all parts after truth, must be sure to settle in his head determined ideas of all that he employs his thoughts about, and never fail to judge himself, and judge unbiassedly, of all that he receives from others, either in their writings or discourses. Reverence or prejudice must not be suffered to give beauty or deformity to any of their opinions.

SECT. IV.—OF PRACTICE AND HABITS.

WE are born with faculties and powers capable almost of anything, such at least as would carry us farther than can be easily imagined: but it is only the exercise of those powers which gives us ability and skill in anything, and leads us towards perfection.

A middle-aged ploughman will scarce ever be brought to the carriage and language of a gentleman, though his body be as well proportioned, and his joints as supple, and his natural parts not any way inferior. The legs of a dancing-master, and the fingers of a musician, fall, as it were naturally, without thought or pains, into regular and admirable motions. Bid them change their parts, and they will in vain endeavor to produce like motions in the members not used to them, and it will require length of time and long practice to attain but some degrees of a like ability. What incredible and astonishing actions do we find rope-dancers and tumblers bring their bodies to! not but that sundry in almost all manual arts are as wonderful; but I name those which the world takes notice of for such, because, on that very account, they give money to see them. All these admired motions, beyond the reach and almost the conception of unpractised spectators, are nothing but the mere effects of use and industry in men whose bodies have nothing peculiar in them from those of the amazed lookers-on.

As it is in the body, so it is in the mind; practice makes it what it is: and most even of those excellences which are looked on as natural endowments, will be found, when examined into more narrowly, to be the product of exercise, and to be raised to that pitch only by repeated actions. Some men are remarked for pleasantness in raillery, others for apologues and opposite diverting stories. This is apt to be taken for the effect of pure nature, and that the rather, because it is not got by rules, and those who excel in either of them never purposely set themselves to the study of it as an art to be learned. But yet it is true, that at first some lucky hit which took with somebody, and gained him commendation, encouraged him to try again, inclined his thoughts and endeavors that way, till at last he insensibly got a facility in it without perceiving how; and that is attributed wholly to nature which was much more the effect of use and practice. I do not deny that natural disposition may often give

the first rise to it; but that never carries a man far without use and exercise, and it is practice alone that brings the powers of the mind, as well as those of the body, to their perfection. Many a good poetic vein is buried under a trade, and never produces anything for want of improvement. We see the ways of discourse and reasoning are very different, even concerning the same matter, at court and in the University. And he that will go but from Westminster Hall to the Exchange, will find a different genius and turn in their ways of talking; and one cannot think that all whose lot fell in the city were born with different parts from those who were bred at the University or inns of court.

To what purpose all this, but to show that the difference so observable in men's understandings and parts does not arise so much from the natural faculties as acquired habits? He would be laughed at that should go about to make a fine dancer out of a country hedger at past fifty. And he will not have much better success who shall endeavor at that age to make a man reason well, or speak handsomely, who has never been used to it, though you should lay before him a collection of all the best precepts of logic or oratory. Nobody is made anything by hearing of rules, or laying them up in his memory; practice must settle the habit of doing without reflecting on the rule: and you may as well hope to make a good painter or musician extempore by a lecture and instruction in the arts of music and painting, as a coherent thinker or strict reasoner by a set of rules, showing him wherein right reasoning consists.

This being so, that defects and weakness in men's understandings, as well as other faculties, come from want of a right use of their own minds, I am apt to think the fault is generally mislaid upon nature, and there is often a complaint of want of parts when the fault lies in want of a due improvement of them. We see men frequently dexterous and sharp enough in making a bargain, who, if you reason with them about matters of religion, appear perfectly stupid.

SECT. V.—IDEAS.

I WILL not here, in what relates to the right conduct and improvement of the understanding, repeat again the getting clear and determined ideas, and the employing our thoughts rather about them than about sounds put for them; nor of settling the signification of words which we use with ourselves in the search of truth, or with others in discoursing about it. Those hinderances of our understandings in the pursuit of knowledge I have sufficiently enlarged upon in another place, so that nothing more needs here to be said of those matters.

SECT. VI.—PRINCIPLES.

THERE is another fault that stops or misleads men in their knowledge, which I have also spoken something of, but yet is necessary to mention here again, that we may examine it to the bottom, and see the root it springs from, and that is a custom of taking up with principles that are not self-evident, and very often not so much as true. It is not unusual to see men rest their opinions upon foundations that have no more certainty nor solidity than the prepositions built on them, and embraced for their sake. Such foundations are these and the like, viz.: The founders or leaders of my party are good men, and therefore their tenets are true; it is the opinion of a sect that is erroneous, therefore it is false; it hath been long received in the world, therefore it is true; or, it is new, and therefore false.

These, and many the like, which are by no means the measure of truth and falsehood, the generality of men make the standards by which they accustom their understanding to judge. And thus, they falling into a habit of determining of truth or falsehood by such wrong measures, it is no wonder they should embrace

error for certainty, and be very positive in things they have no ground for.

There is not any one who pretends to the least reason, but when any of these his false maxims are brought to the test, must acknowledge them to be fallible, and such as he will not allow in those that differ from him; and yet, after he is convinced of this, you shall see him go on in the use of them, and the very next occasion that offers argue again upon the same grounds. Would one not be ready to think that men are willing to impose upon themselves, and mislead their own understanding, who conduct them by such wrong measures, even after they see they cannot be relied on? But yet they will not appear so blameable as may be thought at first sight: for I think there are a great many that argue thus in earnest, and do it not to impose on themselves or others. They are persuaded of what they say, and think there is weight in it, though in a like case they have been convinced there is none; but men would be intolerable to themselves, and contemptible to others, if they should embrace opinions without any ground, and hold what they could give no manner of reason for. True or false, solid or sandy, the mind must have some foundation to rest itself upon; and, as I have remarked in another place, it no sooner entertains any proposition, but it presently hastens to some hypothesis to bottom it on; till then it is unquiet and unsettled. So much do our own very tempers dispose us to a right use of our understandings if we would follow as we should the inclinations of our nature.

In some matters of concernment, especially those of religion, men are not permitted to be always wavering and uncertain; they must embrace and profess some tenets or other; and it would be a shame, nay, a contradiction too heavy for any one's mind to lie constantly under, for him to pretend seriously to be persuaded of the truth of any religion, and yet not be able to give any reason of his belief, or to say anything for his preference of this to any other opinion;

and therefore they must make use of some principles or other, and those can be no other than such as they have and can manage; and to say they are not in earnest persuaded by them, and do not rest upon those they make use of, is contrary to experience, and to allege that they are not misled when we complain they are.

If this be so, it will be urged, Why then do they not rather make use of sure and unquestionable principles, rather than rest on such grounds as may deceive them, and will, as is visible, serve to support error as well as truth?

To this I answer, the reason why they do not make use of better and surer principles is because they cannot: but this inability proceeds not from want of natural parts (for those few whose case that is are to be excused), but for want of use and exercise. Few men are from their youth accustomed to strict reasoning, and to trace the dependence of any truth in a long train of consequences to its remote principles, and to observe its connection; and he that by frequent practice has not been used to this employment of his understanding, it is no more wonder that he should not, when he is grown into years, be able to bring his mind to it, than that he should not be on a sudden able to grave or design, dance on the ropes, or write a good hand, who has never practised either of them.

Nay, the most of men are so wholly strangers to this, that they do not so much as perceive their want of it: they despatch the ordinary business of their callings by rote, as we say, as they have learned it; and if at any time they miss success, they impute it to anything rather than want of thought or skill; that, they conclude (because they know no better), they have in perfection: or if there be any subject that interest or fancy has recommended to their thoughts, their reasoning about it is still after their own fashion, be it better or worse; it serves their turns, and is the best they are acquainted with; and therefore, when they are led into it by mistakes, and their business

succeeds accordingly, they impute it to any cross accident or default of others rather than to their own want of understanding; that it is what nobody discovers or complains of in himself. Whosoever made it his business to miscarry, it was not want of right thought or judgment in himself; he sees no such defect in himself, but is satisfied that he carries on his designs well enough by his own reasoning, or at least should have done, had it not been for unlucky traverses not in his power. Thus, being content with this short and very imperfect use of his understanding, he never troubles himself to seek out methods of improving his mind, and lives all his life without any notion of close reasoning, in a continued connection of a long train of consequences from sure foundations, such as is requisite for the making out and clearing most of the speculative truths most men own to believe and are most concerned in. Not to mention here what I shall have occasion to insist on by and by more fully, viz., that in many cases it is not one series of consequences will serve the turn, but many different and opposite deductions must be examined and laid together before a man can come to make a right judgment of the thing in question. What, then, can be expected from men that neither see the want of any such kind of reasoning as this; nor, if they do, know they how to set about it, or could perform it? You may as well set a countryman, who scarce knows the figures, and never cast up a sum of three particulars, to state a merchant's long account, and find the true balance of it.

What, then, should be done in the case? I answer, we should always remember what I said above, that the faculties of our souls are improved and made useful to us, just after the same manner as our bodies are. Would you have a man write or paint, dance or fence well, or perform any other manual operation dexterously and with ease, let him have never so much vigor and activity, suppleness and address, naturally, yet nobody expects this from him unless he has been

used to it, and has employed time and pains in fashioning and forming his hand or outward parts to these motions. Just so it is in the mind: would you have a man reason well, you must use him to it betimes; exercise his mind in observing the connection of ideas, and following them in train. Nothing does this better than mathematics, which therefore I think should be taught all those who have the time and opportunity, not so much to make them mathematicians, as to make them reasonable creatures; for though we all call ourselves so, because we are born to it if we please, yet we may truly say nature gives us but the seeds of it, we are born to be, if we please, rational creatures, but it is use and exercise only that makes us so, and we are indeed so no farther than industry and application has carried us, And therefore, in ways of reasoning which men have not been used to, he that will observe the conclusion they take up must be satisfied they are not at all rational.

This has been the less taken notice of, because every one in his private affairs uses some sort of reasoning or other, enough to denominate him reasonable. But the mistake is, that he that is found reasonable in one thing is concluded to be so in all; and to think or say otherwise is thought so unjust an affront, and so senseless to censure, that nobody ventures to do it. It looks like the degradation of a man below the dignity of his nature. It is true that he that reasons well in any one thing has a mind naturally capable of reasoning well in others, and to the same degree of strength and clearness, and possibly much greater, had his understanding been so employed. But it is as true that he who can reason well to-day about one sort of matters, cannot at all reason to-day about others, though perhaps a year hence he may. But, wherever a man's rational faculty fails him, and will not serve him to reason, there we cannot say he is rational how capable soever he may be by time and exercise to become so.

Try in men of low and mean education, who have

never elevated their thoughts above the spade and the plough, nor looked beyond the ordinary drudgery of a day-laborer. Take the thoughts of such a one, used for many years to one tract, out of that narrow compass he has been all his life confined to, you will find him no more capable of reasoning than almost a perfect natural. Some one or two rules, on which their conclusions immediately depend, you will find in most men have governed all their thoughts: these, true or false, have been the maxims they have been guided by: take these from them, and they are perfectly at a loss; their compass and pole-star then are gone, and their understanding is perfectly at a nonplus: and therefore they either immediately return to their old maxims again, as the foundations of all truth to them, notwithstanding all that can be said to show their weakness; or, if they give them up to their reasons, they with them give up all truth and farther inquiry, and think there is no such thing as certainty. For if you would enlarge their thoughts, and settle them upon more remote and surer principles, they either cannot easily apprehend them, or if they can, know not what use to make of them; for long deductions from remote principles is what they have not been used to, and cannot manage.

What then! can grown men never be improved or enlarged in their understandings? I say not so; but this I think I may say, that it will not be done without industry and application, which will require more time and pains than grown men, settled in their course of life, will allow to it, and therefore very seldom is done. And this very capacity of attaining it by use and exercise only, brings us back to that which I laid down before, that it is only practice that improves our minds as well as bodies, and we must expect nothing from our understandings any farther than they are perfected by habits.

The Americans are not all born with worse understandings than the Europeans, though we see none of them have such reaches in the arts and sciences

And among the children of a poor countryman, the lucky chance of education and getting into the world gives one infinitely the superiority in parts over the rest, who, continuing at home, had continued also just of the same size with his brethren.

He that has to do with young scholars, especially in mathematics, may perceive how their minds open by degrees, and how it is exercise alone that opens them. Sometimes they will stick a long time at a part of demonstration, not for want of will or application, but really for want of perceiving the connection of two ideas, that, to one whose understanding is more exercised, is as visible as anything can be. The same would be with a grown man beginning to study mathematics; the understanding, for want of use, often sticks in a very plain way; and he himself that is so puzzled, when he comes to see the connection, wonders what it was he stuck at in a case so plain.

SECT. VII.—MATHEMATICS.

I HAVE mentioned mathematics as a way to settle in the mind a habit of reasoning closely and in train; not that I think it necessary that all men should be deep mathematicians, but that, having got the way of reasoning which that study necessarily brings the mind to, they might be able to transfer it to other parts of knowledge, as they shall have occasion. For in all sorts of reasoning, every single argument should be managed as a mathematical demonstration; the connection and dependence of ideas should be followed till the mind is brought to the source on which it bottoms, and observes the coherence all along; though in proofs of probability, one such train is not enough to settle the judgment as in demonstrative knowledge.

Where a truth is made out by one demonstration, there needs no farther inquiry; but in all probabilities where there wants demonstration to establish the truth beyond doubt, there it is not enough to trace one ar-

gument to its source, and observe its strength and weakness, but all the arguments, after having been so examined on both sides, must be laid in balance one against another, and upon the whole the understanding determines its assent.

This is a way of reasoning the understanding should be accustomed to, which is so different from what the illiterate are used to, that even learned men oftentimes seem to have little or no notion of it. Nor is it to be wondered, since the way of disputing in the schools leads them quite away from it, by insisting on one topical argument, by the success of which the truth or falsehood of the question is to be determined, and victory adjudged to the opponent or defendant; which is all one as if he should balance an account by one sum charged and discharged, when there are a hundred others to be taken into consideration.

This, therefore, it would be well if men's minds were accustomed to, and that early, that they might not erect their opinions upon one single view, when so many other are requisite to make up the account, and must come into the reckoning before a man can form a right judgment. This would enlarge their minds, and give a due freedom to their understandings, that they might not be led into error by presumption, laziness, or precipitancy; for I think nobody can approve such a conduct of the understanding as should mislead it from truth, though it be never so much in fashion to make use of it.

To this perhaps it will be objected, that to manage the understanding as I propose would require every man to be a scholar, and to be furnished with all the materials of knowledge, and exercised in all the ways of reasoning. To which I answer, that it is a shame for those that have time and the means to attain knowledge, to want any helps or assistance for the improvement of their understandings that are to be got, and to such I would be thought here chiefly to speak. Those, methinks, who by the industry and parts of their ancestors have been set free from a constant

drudgery to their backs and their bellies, should bestow some of their spare time on their heads, and open their minds by some trials and essays in all the sorts and matters of reasoning. I have before mentioned mathematics, wherein algebra gives new helps and views to the understanding. If I propose these, it is not, as I said, to make every man a thorough mathematician or a deep algebraist; but yet I think the study of them is of infinite use even to grown men; first, by experimentally convincing them, that to make any one reason well, it is not enough to have parts wherewith he is satisfied, and that serve him well enough in his ordinary course. A man in those studies will see, that however good he may think his understanding, yet in many things, and those very visible, it may fail him. This would take off that presumption that most men have of themselves in this part; and they would not be so apt to think their minds wanted no helps to enlarge them, that there could be nothing added to the acuteness and penetration of their understandings.

Secondly, the study of mathematics would show them the necessity there is, in reasoning, to separate all the distinct ideas, and see the habitudes that all those concerned in the present inquiry have to one another, and to lay by those which relate not to the proposition in hand, and wholly to leave them out of the reckoning. This is that which, in other subjects besides quantity, is what is absolutely requisite to just reasoning, though in them it is not so easily observed nor so carefully practised. In those parts of knowledge where it is thought demonstration has nothing to do, men reason as it were in the lump; and if upon a summary and confused view, or upon a partial consideration, they can raise the appearance of a probability, they usually rest content; especially if it be in a dispute where every little straw is laid hold on, and everything that can but be drawn in any way to give color to the argument is advanced with ostentation. But that mind is not in a posture to find the truth that

does not distinctly take all the parts asunder, and, omitting what is not at all to the point, draw a conclusion from the result of all the particulars which any way influence it. There is another no less useful habit to be got by an application to mathematical demonstrations, and that is, of using the mind to a long train of consequences; but having mentioned that already, I shall not again here repeat it.

As to men whose fortunes and time is narrower, what may suffice them is not of that vast extent as may be imagined, and so comes not within the objection.

Nobody is under an obligation to know everything. Knowledge and science in general is the business only of those who are at ease and leisure. Those who have particular callings ought to understand them: and it is no unreasonable proposal, nor impossible to be compassed, that they should think and reason right about what is their daily employment. This one cannot think them uncapable of, without levelling them with the brutes, and charging them with a stupidity below the rank of rational creatures.

SECT. VIII.—RELIGION.

BESIDES his particular calling for the support of this life, every one has a concern in a future life, which he is bound to look after. This engages his thoughts in religion; and here it mightily lies upon him to understand and reason right. Men therefore cannot be excused from understanding the words, and framing the general notions, relating to religion right. The one day of seven, besides other days of rest, allows in the Christian world time enough for this (had they no other idle hours), if they would but make use of these vacancies from their daily labor, and apply themselves to an improvement of knowledge with as much diligence as they often do to a great many other things that are useless; and had but those that would enter

according to their several capacities in a right way to this knowledge. The original make of their minds is like that of other men, and they would be found not to want understanding fit to receive the knowledge of religion, if they were a little encouraged and helped in it as they should be. For there are instances of very mean people who have raised their minds to a great sense and understanding of religion. And though these have not been so frequent as could be wished, yet they are enough to clear that condition of life from a necessity of gross ignorance, and to show that more might be brought to be rational creatures and Christians (for they can hardly be thought really to be so, who, wearing the name, know not so much as the very principles of that religion), if due care were taken of them. For, if I mistake not, the peasantry lately in France (a rank of people under a much heavier pressure of want and poverty than the day-laborers in England), of the reformed religion, understood it much better, and could say more for it than those of a higher condition among us.

But if it shall be concluded that the meaner sort of people must give themselves up to a brutish stupidity in the things of their nearest concernment, which I see no reason for, this excuses not those of a freer fortune and education if they neglect their understandings, and take no care to employ them as they ought, and set them right in the knowledge of those things for which principally they were given them. At least those whose plentiful fortunes allow them the opportunities and helps of improvements are not so few but that it might be hoped great advancements might be made in knowledge of all kinds, especially in that of the greatest concern and largest view, if men would make a right use of their faculties, and study their own understandings.

SECT. IX.—IDEAS.

OUTWARD corporeal objects, that constantly importune our senses and captivate our appetites, fail not to fill our heads with lively and lasting ideas of that kind. Here the mind needs not be set upon getting greater store; they offer themselves fast enough, and are usually entertained in such plenty, and lodged so carefully, that the mind wants room or attention for others that it has more use and need of. To fit the understanding, therefore, for such reasoning as I have been above speaking of, care should be taken to fill it with moral and more abstract ideas; for these not offering themselves to the senses, but being to be framed to the understanding, people are generally so neglectful of a faculty they are apt to think wants nothing, that I fear most men's minds are more unfurnished with such ideas than is imagined. They often use the words, and how can they be suspected to want the ideas? What I have said in the third book of my Essay will excuse me from any other answer to this question. But to convince people of what moment it is to their understandings to be furnished with such abstract ideas steady and settled in it, give me leave to ask how any one shall be able to know whether he be obliged to be just, if he has not established ideas in his mind of obligation and of justice, since knowledge consists in nothing but the perceived agreement or disagreement of those ideas; and so of all others the like, which concern our lives and manners. And if men do find a difficulty to see the agreement or disagreement of two angles which lie before their eyes unalterably in a diagram, how utterly impossible will it be to perceive it in ideas that have no other sensible objects to represent them to the mind but sounds, with which they have no manner of conformity, and therefore had need to be clearly settled in the mind themselves, if we would make any clear judgment about them! This, therefore, is one of the first things

the mind should be employed about in the right conduct of the understanding, without which it is impossible it should be capable of reasoning right about those matters. But in these, and all other ideas, care must be taken that they harbor no inconsistencies, and that they have a real existence where real existence is supposed, and are not mere chimeras with a supposed existence.

SECT. X.—PREJUDICES.

EVERY one is forward to complain of the prejudices that mislead other men or parties, as if he were free and had none of his own. This being objected on all sides, it is agreed that it is a fault, and a hinderance to knowledge. What now is the cure? No other but this, that every man should let alone other's prejudices, and examine his own. Nobody is convinced of his by the accusation of another: he recriminates by the same rule, and is clear. The only way to remove this great cause of ignorance and error out of the world is, for every one impartially to examine himself. If others will not deal fairly with their own minds, does that make my errors truth, or ought it to make me in love with them and willing to impose on myself? If others love cataracts on their eyes, should that hinder me from couching of mine as soon as I could? Every one declares against blindness, and yet who almost is not fond of that which dims his sight, and keeps the clear light out of his mind, which should lead him into truth and knowledge? False or doubtful positions, relied upon as unquestionable maxims, keep those in the dark from truth who build on them. Such are usually the prejudices imbibed from education, party, reverence, fashion, interest, etc. This is the mote which every one sees in his brother's eye, but never regards the beam in his own. For who is there almost that is ever brought fairly to examine his own principles, and see whether they are such as will bear the

trial? But yet this should be one of the first things every one should set about, and be scrupulous in, who would rightly conduct his understanding in the search of truth and knowledge.

To those who are willing to get rid of this great hinderance of knowledge (for to such only I write), to those who would shake off this great and dangerous impostor Prejudice, who dresses up falsehood in the likeness of truth, and so dexterously hoodwinks men's minds as to keep them in the dark, with a belief that they are more in the light than any that do not see with their eyes, I shall offer this one mark whereby prejudice may be known. He that is strongly of any opinion must suppose (unless he be self-condemned) that his persuasion is built upon good grounds; and that his assent is no greater than what the evidence of the truth he holds forces him to; and that they are arguments, and not inclination or fancy, that make him so confident and positive in his tenets. Now if, after all his profession, he cannot bear any opposition to his opinion; if he cannot so much as give a patient hearing, much less examine and weigh the arguments on the other side, does he not plainly confess it is prejudice governs him? And it is not evidence of truth, but some lazy anticipation, some beloved presumption, that he desires to rest undisturbed in. For if what he holds be as he gives out, well fenced with evidence, and he sees it to be true, what need he fear to put it to the proof? If his opinion be settled upon a firm foundation, if the arguments that support it and have obtained his assent be clear, good, and convincing, why should he be shy to have it tried whether they be proof or not? He whose assent goes beyond his evidence, owes this excess of his adherence only to prejudice, and does in effect own it when he refuses to hear what is offered against it; declaring thereby, that it is not evidence he seeks, but the quiet enjoyment of the opinion he is fond of, with a forward condemnation of all that may stand in opposition to it, unheard and unexamined; which, what is it but prejudice? *Qui æquum*

statuerit parte inauditâ alterâ, etiam si æquum statuerit haud æquu, fuerit. He that would acquit himself in this case as a lover of truth, not giving way to any preoccupation or bias that may mislead him, must do two things that are not very common nor very easy.

Sect. XI.—INDIFFERENCY.

First, he must not be in love with any opinion, or wish it to be true, until he knows it to be so, and then he will not need to wish it: for nothing that is false can deserve our good wishes, nor a desire that it should have the place and force of truth; and yet nothing is more frequent than this. Men are fond of certain tenets upon no other evidence but respect and custom, and think they must maintain them, or all is gone, though they have never examined the ground they stand on, nor have ever made them out to themselves, or can make them out to others. We should contend earnestly for the truth, but we should first be sure that it is truth, or else we fight against God, who is the God of truth, and do the work of the devil, who is the father and propagator of lies; and our zeal, though never so warm, will not excuse us; for this is plainly prejudice.

Sect. XII.—EXAMINE.

Secondly, he must do that which he will find himself very averse to, as judging the thing unnecessary, or himself uncapable of doing of it. He must try whether his principles be certainly true or not, and how far he may safely rely upon them. This, whether fewer have the heart or the skill to do, I shall not determine; but this I am sure, this is that which every one ought to do who professes to love truth, and would not impose upon himself, which is a surer way to be made a fool of than by being exposed to the sophistry

of others. The disposition to put any cheat upon ourselves works constantly, and we are pleased with it, but are impatient of being bantered or misled by others. The inability I here speak of, is not any natural defect that makes men uncapable of examining their own principles. To such, rules of conducting their understandings are useless, and that is the case of very few. The great number is of those whom the ill habit of never exerting their thoughts has disabled: the powers of their minds are starved by disuse, and have lost that reach and strength which nature fitted them to receive from exercise. Those who are in a condition to learn the first rules of plain arithmetic, and could be brought to cast up an ordinary sum, are capable of this, if they had but accustomed their minds to reasoning; but they that have wholly neglected the exercise of their understandings in this way, will be very far at first from being able to do it, and as unfit for it as one unpractised in figures to cast up a shop-book, and perhaps think it as strange to be set about it. And yet it must nevertheless be confessed to be a wrong use of our understandings, to build our tenets (in things where we are concerned to hold the truth) upon principles that may lead us into error. We take our principles at hap-hazard upon trust, and without ever having examined them, and then believe a whole system upon a presumption that they are true and solid: and what is all this but childish, shameful, senseless credulity?

In these two things, viz., an equal indifferency for all truth, I mean the receiving it in the love of it as truth, but not loving it for any other reason before we know it to be true; and in the examination of our principles, and not receiving any for such, nor building on them, until we are fully convinced, as rational creatures, of their solidity, truth, and certainty, consists that freedom of the understanding which is necessary to a rational creature, and without which it is not truly an understanding. It is conceit, fancy, extravagance, anything rather than understanding, if it

must be under the constraint of receiving and holding opinions by the authority of anything but their own, not fancied, but perceived evidence. This was rightly called imposition, and is of all other the worst and most dangerous sort of it. For we impose upon ourselves, which is the strongest imposition of all others; and we impose upon ourselves in that part which ought with the greatest care to be kept free from all imposition. The world is apt to cast great blame on those who have an indifferency for opinions, especially in religion. I fear this is the foundation of great error and worse consequences. To be indifferent which of two opinions is true, is the right temper of the mind that preserves it from being imposed upon, and disposes it to examine with that indifferency, until it has done its best to find the truth, and this is the only direct and safe way to it. But to be indifferent whether we embrace falsehood for truth, or no, is the great road to error. Those who are not indifferent which opinion is true, are guilty of this; they suppose, without examining, that what they hold is true, and then think they ought to be zealous for it. Those, it is plain by their warmth and eagerness, are not indifferent for their own opinions, but methinks are very indifferent whether they be true or false, since they cannot endure to have any doubts raised, or objections made against them; and it is visible they never have made any themselves, and so, never having examined them, know not, nor are concerned, as they should be, to know whether they be true or false.

These are the common and most general miscarriages which I think men should avoid or rectify in a right conduct of their understandings, and should be particularly taken care of in education. The business whereof, in respect of knowledge, is not, as I think, to perfect a learner in all or any one of the sciences, but to give his mind that freedom, that disposition, and those habits that may enable him to attain any part of knowledge he shall apply himself to, or stand in need of, in the future course of his life.

This, and this only, is well principling, and not the instilling a reverence and veneration for certain dogmas under the specious title of principles, which are often so remote from that truth and evidence which belongs to principles, that they ought to be rejected as false and erroneous; and is often the cause, to men so educated, when they come abroad into the world, and find they cannot maintain the principles so taken up and rested in, to cast off all principles, and turn perfect skeptics, regardless of knowledge and virtue.

There are several weaknesses and defects of the understanding, either from the natural temper of the mind, or ill habits taken up, which hinder it in its progress to knowledge. Of these there are as many possibly to be found, if the mind were properly studied, as there are diseases of the body, each whereof clogs and disables the understanding to some degree, and therefore deserves to be looked after and cured. I shall set down some few to excite men, especially those who make knowledge their business, to look into themselves and observe whether they do not indulge some weakness, allow some miscarriages, in the management of their intellectual faculty, which is prejudicial to them in the search of truth.

SECT. XIII.—OBSERVATION.

PARTICULAR matters of fact are the undoubted foundations on which our civil and natural knowledge is built: the benefit the understanding makes of them is, to draw from them conclusions which may be as standing rules of knowledge, and, consequently, of practice. The mind often makes not that benefit it should of the information it receives from the accounts of civil or natural historians, in being too forward or too slow in making observations on the particular facts recorded in them.

There are those who are very assiduous in reading, and yet do not much advance their knowledge by it.

They are delighted with the stories that are told, and perhaps can tell them again, for they make all they read nothing but history to themselves; but not reflecting on it, not making to themselves observations from what they read, they are very little improved by all that crowd of particulars that either pass through or lodge themselves in their understandings. They dream on in a constant course of reading and cramming themselves, but, not digesting anything, it produces nothing but a heap of crudities.

If their memories retain well, one may say they have the materials of knowledge; but, like those for building, they are of no advantage if there be no other use made of them but to let them lie heaped up together. Opposite to these, there are others who lose the improvement they should make of matters of fact by a quite contrary conduct. They are apt to draw general conclusions and raise axioms from every particular they meet with. These make as little true benefit of history as the other; nay, being of forward and active spirits, receive more harm by it; it being of worse consequence to steer one's thoughts by a wrong rule than to have none at all; error doing to busy men much more harm than ignorance to the slow and sluggish. Between these, those seem to do best who, taking material and useful hints, sometimes from single matters of fact, carry them in their minds to be judged of by what they shall find in history to confirm or reverse these imperfect observations, which may be established into rules fit to be relied on when they are justified by a sufficient and wary induction of particulars. He that makes no such reflections on what he reads, only loads his mind with a rhapsody of tales, fit in winter nights for the entertainment of others; and he that will improve every matter of fact into a maxim, will abound in contrary observations, that can be of no other use but to perplex and pudder him if he compares them, or else to misguide him if he gives himself up to the authority of that which for its novelty or some other fancy best pleases him.

SECT. XIV.—BIAS.

NEXT to these we may place those who suffer their own natural tempers and passions they are possessed with to influence their judgments, especially of men and things that may any way relate to their present circumstances and interest. Truth is all simple, all pure; will bear no mixture of anything else with it. It is rigid and inflexible to any bye interests, and so should the understanding be, whose use and excellence lies in conforming itself to it. To think of everything just as it is in itself, is the proper business of the understanding, though it be not that which men always employ it to. This all men at first hearing allow is the right use every one should make of his understanding. Nobody will be at such an open defiance with common sense as to profess that we should not endeavor to know and to think of things as they are in themselves; and yet there is nothing more frequent than to do the contrary; and men are apt to excuse themselves, and think they have reason to do so, if they have but a pretence that it is for God or a good cause; that is, in effect, for themselves, their own persuasion, or party: for to those in their turns the several sects of men, especially in matters of religion, entitle God and a good cause. But God requires not men to wrong or misuse their faculties for him, nor to lie to others or themselves for his sake, which they purposely do who will not suffer their understandings to have right conceptions of the things proposed to them, and designedly restrain themselves from having just thoughts of everything as far as they are concerned to inquire. And as for a good cause, that needs not such ill helps; if it be good, truth will support it, and it has no need of fallacy or falsehood.

SECT. XV.—ARGUMENTS.

VERY much of kin to this is the hunting after arguments to make good one side of a question, and wholly to neglect or refuse those which favor the other side. What is this but wilfully to misguide the understanding? and is so far from giving truth its due value, that it wholly debases it. Espouse opinions that best comport with their power, profit, or credit, and then seek arguments to support them. True light upon this way is of no more avail to us than error; for what is so taken up by us may be false as well as true, and he has not done his duty who has thus stumbled upon truth in his way to preferment.

There is another, but more innocent way of collecting arguments, very familiar among bookish men, which is to furnish themselves with the arguments they meet with *pro* and *con* in the questions they study. This helps them, not to judge right nor argue strongly, but only to talk copiously on either side, without being steady and settled in their own judgments; for such arguments gathered from other men's thoughts, floating only in the memory, are there ready indeed to supply copious talk with some appearance of reason, but are far from helping us to judge right. Such variety of arguments only distract the understanding that relies on them, unless it has gone farther than such a superficial way of examining; this is to quit truth for appearance only to serve our vanity. The sure and only way to get true knowledge is to form in our minds clear, sett'ed notions of things, with names annexed to those determined ideas. These we are to consider, and with their several relations and habitudes, and not amuse ourselves with floating names and words of determined signification, which we can use in several senses to serve a turn. It is in the perception of the habitudes and respects our ideas have one to another that real knowledge

consists; and when a man once perceives how far they agree or disagree one with another, he will be able to judge of what other people say, and will not need to be led by the arguments of others, which are many of them nothing but plausible sophistry. This will teach him to state the question right, and see whereon it turns; and thus he will stand upon his own legs, and know by his own understanding. Whereas, by collecting and learning arguments by heart, he will be but a retainer to others; and when any one questions the foundations they are built upon, he will be at a nonplus, and be fain to give up his implicit knowledge.

SECT. XVI.—HASTE.

LABOR for labor's sake is against nature. The understanding, as well as all the other faculties, choosing always the shortest way to its end, would presently obtain the knowledge it is about, and then set upon some new inquiry. But this, whether laziness or haste, often misleads it, and makes it content itself with improper ways of search, and such as will not serve the turn. Sometimes it rests upon testimony when testimony of right has nothing to do, because it is easier to believe than to be scientifically instructed. Sometimes it contents itself with one argument, and rests satisfied with that, as it were a demonstration; whereas the thing under proof is not capable of demonstration, and therefore must be submitted to the trial of probabilities, and all the material arguments *pro* and *con* be examined and brought to a balance. In some cases the mind is determined by probable topics, and inquiries where demonstration may be had. All these, and several others, which laziness, impatience, custom, and want of use and attention lead men into, are misapplications of the understanding in the search of truth. In every question, the nature and manner of the proof it is capable of should first be considered, to make our inquiry such as it should

be. This would save a great deal of frequently misemployed pains, and lead us sooner to that discovery and possession of truth we are capable of. The multiplying variety of arguments, especially frivolous ones, such as are all that are merely verbal, is not only lost labor, but cumbers the memory to no purpose, and serves only to hinder it from seizing and holding of the truth in all those cases which are capable of demonstration. In such a way of proof the truth and certainty is seen, and the mind fully possesses itself of it; when in the other way of assent it only hovers about it, is amused with uncertainties. In this superficial way, indeed, the mind is capable of more variety of plausible talk, but is not enlarged as it should be in its knowledge. It is to this same haste and impatience of the mind, also, that a not due tracing of the arguments to their true foundation is owing; men see a little, presume a great deal, and so jump to the conclusion. This is a short way to fancy and conceit, and (if firmly embraced) to opiniatrety, but is certainly the farthest way about to knowledge. For he that will know must, by the connection of the proofs, see the truth, and the ground it stands on: and, therefore, if he has for haste skipped over what he should have examined, he must begin and go over all again, or else he will never come to knowledge.

SECT. XVII.—DESULTORY.

ANOTHER fault of as ill consequence as this, which proceeds also from laziness, with a mixture of vanity, is the skipping from one sort of knowledge to another. Some men's tempers are quickly weary of any one thing. Constancy and assiduity is what they cannot bear: the same study long continued in is as intolerable to them, as the appearing long in the same clothes or fashion is to a court lady.

SECT. XVIII.—SMATTERING.

OTHERS, that they may seem universally knowing, get a little smattering in everything. Both these may fill their heads with superficial notions of things, but are very much out of the way of attaining truth of knowledge.

SECT. XIX.—UNIVERSALITY.

I DO not here speak against the taking a taste of every sort of knowledge; it is certainly very useful and necessary to form the mind: but then it must be done in a different way, and to a different end. Not for talk and vanity to fill the head with shreds of all kinds, that he who is possessed of such a frippery may be able to match all the discourse of all he shall meet with, as if nothing could come amiss to him; and his head was so well a stored magazine that nothing could be proposed which he was not master of, and was readily furnished to entertain any one on. This is an excellency indeed, and a great one too, to have a real and true knowledge in all or most of the objects of contemplation. But it is what the mind of one and the same man can hardly attain unto; and the instances are so few of those who have in any measure approached towards it, that I know not whether they are to be proposed as examples in the ordinary conduct of the understanding. For a man to understand fully the business of his particular calling in the commonwealth, and of religion, which is his calling as he is a man in the world, is usually enough to take up his whole time; and there are few that inform themselves in these, which is every man's proper and peculiar business, so to the bottom as they should do. But though this be so, and there are very few men that extend their thoughts towards universal knowledge, yet I do not doubt but if the right way were taken, and the methods of inquiry were ordered as they should be, men of little

business and great leisure might go a great deal farther in it than is usually done. To return to the business in hand: The end and use of a little insight in those parts of knowledge which are not a man's proper business, is to accustom our minds to all sorts of ideas, and the proper ways of examining their habitudes and relations. This gives the mind a freedom; and the exercising the understanding in the several ways of inquiry and reasoning, which the most skilful have made use of, teaches the mind sagacity and wariness, and a suppleness to apply itself more closely and dexterously to the bents and turns of the matter in all its researches. Besides, this universal taste of all the sciences, with an indifferency before the mind is possessed with any one in particular, and grown into love and admiration of what is made its darling, will prevent another evil very commonly to be observed in those who have from the beginning been seasoned only by one part of knowledge. Let a man be given up to the contemplation of one sort of knowledge, and that will become everything. The mind will take such a tincture from a familiarity with that object, that everything else, how remote soever, will be brought under the same view. A metaphysician will bring ploughing and gardening immediately to abstract notions; the history of nature shall signify nothing to him. An alchemist, on the contrary, shall reduce divinity to the maxims of his laboratory, explain morality by *sal*, *sulphur*, and *mercury*, and allegorize the Scripture itself, and the sacred mysteries thereof, into the philosopher's stone. And I heard once a man, who had a more than ordinary excellency in music, seriously accommodate Moses's seven days of the first week to the notes of music, as if from thence had been taken the measure and method of the creation. It is of no small consequence to keep the mind from such a possession, which I think is best done by giving it a fair and equal view of the whole intellectual world, wherein it may see the order, rank, and beauty of the whole, and give a just allowance to the distinct

provinces of the several sciences in the due order and usefulness of each of them.

If this be that which old men will not think necessary, nor be easily brought to, it is fit at least that it should be practised in the breeding of the young. The business of education, as I have already observed, is not, as I think, to make them perfect in any one of the sciences, but so to open and dispose their minds as may best make them capable of any, when they shall apply themselves to it. If men are for a long time accustomed only to one sort or method of thoughts, their minds grow stiff in it, and do not readily turn to another. It is therefore to give them this freedom that I think they should be made to look into all sorts of knowledge, and exercise their understandings in so wide a variety and stock of knowledge. But I do not propose it as a variety and stock of knowledge, but a variety and freedom of thinking; as an increase of the powers and activity of the mind, not as an enlargement of its possessions.

SECT. XX.—READING.

THIS is that which I think great readers are apt to be mistaken in. Those who have read of everything are thought to understand everything too; but it is not always so. Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge: it is thinking makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections; unless we chew them over again, they will not give us strength and nourishment. There are indeed, in some writers, visible instances of deep thought, close and acute reasoning, and ideas well pursued. The light these would give would be of great use if their readers would observe and imitate them: all the rest, at best, are but particulars fit to be turned into knowledge; but that can be done only by our own meditation, and examining the reach,

force, and coherence of what is said; and then, as far as we apprehend and see the connection of ideas, so far is it ours; without that it is but so much loose matter floating in our brain. The memory may be stored, but the judgment is little better, and the stock of knowledge not increased by being able to repeat what others have said, or produce the arguments we have found in them. Such a knowledge as this is but knowledge by hearsay, and the ostentation of it is at best but talking by rote, and very often upon weak and wrong principles. For all that is to be found in books is not built upon true foundations, nor always rightly deduced from the principles it is pretended to be built on. Such an examen as is requisite to discover that, every reader's mind is not forward to make; especially in those who have given themselves up to a party, and only hunt for what they can scrape together that may favor and support the tenets of it. Such men wilfully exclude themselves from truth, and from all true benefit to be received by reading. Others, of more indifferency, often want attention and industry. The mind is backward in itself to be at the pains to trace every argument to its original, and to see upon what basis it stands, and how firmly; but yet it is this that gives so much the advantage to one man more than another in reading. The mind should, by severe rules, be tied down to this, at first uneasy, task, use and exercise will give it facility. So that those who are accustomed to it, readily, as it were with one cast of the eye, take a view of the argument, and presently, in most cases, see where it bottoms. Those who have got this faculty, one may say, have got the true key of books, and the clew to lead them through the mizmaze of variety of opinions and authors to truth and certainty. This young beginners should be entered in and showed the use of, that they might profit by their reading. Those who are strangers to it will be apt to think it too great a clog in the way of men's studies; and they will suspect they shall make but small progress if, in the books they read, they must stand to examine and

unravel every argument, and follow it step by step up to its original.

I answer, this is a good objection, and ought to weigh with those whose reading is designed for much talk and little knowledge, and I have nothing to say to it. But I am here inquiring into the conduct of the understanding in its progress towards knowledge; and to those who aim at that, I may say, that he who fair and softly goes steadily forward in a course that points right, will sooner be at his journey's end than he that runs after every one he meets, though he gallop all day full speed.

To which let me add, that this way of thinking on, and profiting by what we read, will be a clog and rub to any one only in the beginning; when custom and exercise have made it familiar, it will be despatched, in the most occasions, without resting or interruption in the course of our reading. The motions and views of a mind exercised that way are wonderfully quick; and a man used to such sort of reflections sees as much at one glimpse as would require a long discourse to lay before another, and make out in an entire and gradual deduction. Besides, that when the first difficulties are over, the delight and sensible advantage it brings mightily encourages and enlivens the mind in reading, which without this is very improperly called study.

SECT. XXI.—INTERMEDIATE PRINCIPLES.

AS a help to this, I think it may be proposed, that for the saving the long progression of the thoughts to remote and first principles in every case, the mind should provide itself several stages; that is to say, intermediate principles, which it might have recourse to in the examining those positions that come in its way. These, though they are not self-evident principles, yet, if they have been made out from them by a wary and unquestionable deduction, may be depended on as certain and infallible truths, and serve as unquestion-

able truths to prove other points depending upon them, by a nearer and shorter view than remote and general maxims. These may serve as landmarks to show what lies in the direct way of truth, or is quite beside it. And thus mathematicians do, who do not in every new problem run it back to the first axioms, through all the whole train of intermediate propositions. Certain theorems that they have settled to themselves upon sure demonstration, serve to resolve to them multitudes of propositions which depend on them, and are as firmly made out from thence as if the mind went afresh over every link of the whole chain that tie them to first self-evident principles. Only in other sciences great care is to be taken that they establish those intermediate principles with as much caution, exactness, and indifferency as mathematicians use in the settling any of their great theorems. When this is not done, but men take up the principles in this or that science upon credit, inclination, interest, etc., in haste, without due examination and most unquestionable proof, they lay a trap for themselves, and, as much as in them lies, captivate their understanding to mistake, falsehood, and error.

Sect. XXII.—PARTIALITY.

As there is a partiality to opinions which, as we have already observed, is very apt to mislead the understanding, so there is often a partiality to studies which is prejudicial also to knowledge and improvement. Those sciences which men are particularly versed in they are apt to value and extol, as if that part of knowledge which every one has acquainted himself with were that alone which was worth the having, and all the rest were idle and empty amusements, comparatively of no use or importance. This is the effect of ignorance, and not knowledge; the being vainly puffed up with a flatulency arising from a weak and narrow comprehension. It is not amiss that every one should relish the science that he has made his pe-

culiar study; a view of its beauties, and a sense of its usefulness, carries a man on with the more delight and warmth in the pursuit and improvement of it. But the contempt of all other knowledge, as if it were nothing in comparison of law or physic, of astronomy or chemistry, or perhaps some yet meaner part of knowledge, wherein I have got some smattering or am somewhat advanced, is not only the mark of a vain or little mind, but does this prejudice in the conduct of the understanding, that it coops it up within narrow bounds, and hinders it from looking abroad into other provinces of the intellectual world, more beautiful possibly, and more fruitful than that which it had until then labored in; wherein it might find, besides new knowledge, ways or hints whereby it might be enabled the better to cultivate its own

SECT. XXIII.—THEOLOGY.

THERE is indeed one science (as they are now distinguished) incomparably above all the rest, where it is not by corruption narrowed into a trade or faction, for mean or ill ends and secular interests; I mean theology, which, containing the knowledge of God and his creatures, our duty to him and our fellow-creatures, and a view of our present and future state, is the comprehension of all other knowledge directed to its true end: *i. e.*, the honor and veneration of the Creator, and the happiness of mankind. This is that noble study which is every man's duty, and every one that can be called a rational creature is capable of. The works of nature, and the words of revelation, display it to mankind in characters so large and visible, that those who are not quite blind may in them read and see the first principles and most necessary parts of it; and from thence, as they have time and industry, may be enabled to go on to the more abstruse parts of it, and penetrate into those infinite depths, filled with the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This is that sci-

ence which would truly enlarge men's minds, were it studied or permitted to be studied, everywhere with that freedom, love of truth, and charity which it teaches, and were not made, contrary to its nature, the occasion of strife, faction, or malignity, and narrow impositions. I shall say no more here of this, but that it is undoubtedly a wrong use of my understanding to make it the rule and measure of another man's; a use which it is neither fit for nor capable of.

SECT. XXIV.—PARTIALITY.

THIS partiality, where it is not permitted an authority to render all other studies insignificant or contemptible, is often indulged so far as to be relied upon, and made use of, in other parts of knowledge to which it does not at all belong, and wherewith it has no manner of affinity. Some men have so used their heads to mathematical figures, that, giving a preference to the methods of that science, they introduce lines and diagrams into their study of divinity or politic inquiries, as if nothing could be known without them; and others, accustomed to retired speculations, run natural philosophy into metaphysical notions, and the abstract generalities of logic: and how often may one meet with religion and morality treated of in the terms of the laboratory, and thought to be improved by the methods and notions of chemistry! But he that will take care of the conduct of his understanding, to direct it right to the knowledge of things, must avoid these undue mixtures, and not, by a fondness for what he has found useful and necessary in one, transfer it to another science, where it serves only to perplex and confound the understanding. It is a certain truth that *res nolunt male administrari:* it is no less certain, *res nolunt male intelligi.* Things themselves are to be considered as they are in themselves, and then they will show us in what way they are to be understood. For to have right conceptions about them, we must

bring our understandings to the inflexible natures and unalterable relations of things, and not endeavor to bring things to any preconceived notions of our own.

There is another partiality very commonly observable in men of study, no less prejudicial nor ridiculous than the former; and that is, a fantastical and wild attributing all knowledge to the ancients alone, or to the moderns. This raving upon antiquity in matter of poetry, Horace has wittily described and exposed in one of his satires. The same sort of madness may be found in reference to all the other sciences. Some will not admit an opinion not authorized by men of old, who were then all giants in knowledge. Nothing is to be put into the treasury of truth or knowledge which has not the stamp of Greece or Rome upon it; and, since their days, will scarce allow that men have been able to see, think, or write. Others, with a like extravagancy, contemn all that the ancients have left us, and, being taken with the moderns' inventions and discoveries, lay by all that went before, as if whatever is called old must have the decay of time upon it, and truth too were liable to mould and rottenness. Men, I think, have been much the same for natural endowments in all times. Fashion, discipline, and education have put eminent differences in the ages of several countries, and made one generation much differ from another in arts and sciences. But truth is always the same, time alters it not, nor is it the better or worse for being of ancient or modern tradition. Many were eminent in former ages of the world for their discovery and delivery of it; but though the knowledge they have left us be worth our study, yet they exhausted not all its treasure; they left a great deal for the industry and sagacity of after ages, and so shall we. That was once new to them which any one now receives with veneration for its antiquity; nor was it the worse for appearing as a novelty: and that which is now embraced for its newness, will to posterity be old, but not thereby be less true or less genuine. There is no occasion on this account to oppose the ancients

and the moderns to one another, or to be squeamish on either side. He that wisely conducts his mind in the pursuit of knowledge, will gather what lights and get what helps he can from either of them, from whom they are best to be had without adoring the errors or rejecting the truths which he may find mingled in them.

Another partiality may be observed, in some to vulgar, in others to heterodox tenets. Some are apt to conclude that what is the common opinion cannot but be true: so many men's eyes, they think, cannot but see right; so many men's understandings of all sorts cannot be deceived; and therefore will not venture to look beyond the received notions of the place and age, nor have so presumptuous a thought as to be wiser than their neighbors. They are content to go with the crowd, and so go easily, which they think is going right, or at least serves them as well. But, however *vox populi vox Dei* has prevailed as a maxim, yet I do not remember wherever God delivered his oracles by the multitude, or nature truths by the herd. On the other side, some fly all common opinions as either false or frivolous. The title many-headed beast is a sufficient reason to them to conclude that no truths of weight or consequence can be lodged there. Vulgar opinions are suited to vulgar capacities, and adapted to the ends of those that govern. He that will know the truth of things, must leave the common and beaten track, which none but weak and servile minds are satisfied to trudge along continually in. Such nice palates relish nothing but strange notions quite out of the way; whatever is commonly received has the mark of the beast on it, and they think it a lessening to them to hearken to it or receive it; their mind runs only after paradoxes; these they seek, these they embrace, these alone they vent, and so, as they think, distinguish themselves from the vulgar. But common or uncommon are not the marks to distinguish truth or falsehood, and therefore should not be any bias to us in our inquiries. We should not

judge of things by men's opinions, but of opinions by things. The multitude reason but ill, and therefore may be well suspected, and cannot be relied on, nor should be followed as a sure guide; but philosophers, who have quitted the orthodoxy of the community, and the popular doctrines of their countries, have fallen into as extravagant and as absurd opinions as ever common reception countenanced. It would be madness to refuse to breathe the common air, or quench one's thirst with water, because the rabble use them to these purposes: and if there are conveniences of life which common use reaches not, it is not reason to reject them, because they are not grown into the ordinary fashion of the country, and every villager doth not know them.

Truth, whether in or out of fashion, is the measure of knowledge and the business of the understanding; whatsoever is besides that, however authorized by consent or recommended by rarity, is nothing but ignorance or something worse.

Another sort of partiality there is, whereby men impose upon themselves, and by it make their reading little useful to themselves; I mean the making use of the opinions of writers, and laying stress upon their authorities, wherever they find them favor their own opinions.

There is nothing almost has done more harm to men dedicated to letters than giving the name of study to reading, and making a man of great reading to be the same with a man of great knowledge, or, at least, to be a title of honor. All that can be recorded in writing are facts or reasonings. Facts are of three sorts:

1. Merely of natural agents, observable in the ordinary operations of bodies one upon another, whether in the visible course of things left to themselves, or in experiments made by men applying agents and patients to one another, after a peculiar and artificial manner.

2. Of voluntary agents, more especially the actions

of men in society, which makes civil and moral history.

3. Of opinions.

In these three consists, as it seems to me, that which commonly has the name of learning; to which, perhaps, some may add a distinct head of critical writings, which indeed at bottom is nothing but matter of fact, and resolves itself into this, that such a man or set of men used such a word or phrase in such a sense, *i.e.*, that they made such sounds the marks of such ideas.

Under reasonings I comprehend all the discoveries of general truths made by human reason, whether found by intuition, demonstrations, or probable deductions. And this is that which is, if not alone knowledge (because the truth or probability of particular propositions may be known too), yet is, as may be supposed, most properly the business of those who pretend to improve their understandings, and make themselves knowing by reading.

Books and reading are looked upon to be the great helps of the understanding and instruments of knowledge, as it must be allowed that they are; and yet I beg leave to question whether these do not prove a hinderance to many, and keep several bookish men from attaining to solid and true knowledge. This I think I may be permitted to say, that there is no part wherein the understanding needs a more careful and wary conduct than in the use of books; without which they will prove rather innocent amusements than profitable employments of our time, and bring but small additions to our knowledge.

There is not seldom to be found, even among those who aim at knowledge, who with an unwearied industry employ their whole time in books, who scarce allow themselves time to eat or sleep, but read, and read, and read on, but yet make no great advances in real knowledge, though there be no defect in their intellectual faculties to which their little progress can be imputed. The mistake here is, that it is usually supposed that by reading, the author's knowledge is transferred into

the reader's understanding; and so it is, but not by bare reading, but by reading and understanding what he writ. Whereby I mean not barely comprehending what is affirmed or denied in each proposition (though that great readers do not think themselves concerned precisely to do), but to see and follow the train of his reasonings, observe the strength and clearness of their connection, and examine upon what they bottom. Without this a man may read the discourses of a very rational author, writ in a language and in propositions that he very well understands, and yet acquire not one jot of his knowledge; which consisting only in the perceived, certain, or probable connection of the ideas made use of in his reasonings, the reader's knowledge is no farther increased than he perceives that, so much as he sees of this connection, so much he knows of the truth or probability of that author's opinions.

All that he relies on without this perception, he takes upon trust upon the author's credit, without any knowledge of it at all. This makes me not at all wonder to see some men so abound in citations and build so much upon authorities, it being the sole foundation on which they bottom most of their own tenets; so that, in effect, they have but a second-hand or implicit knowledge, *i.e.*, are in the right, if such a one from whom they borrowed it were in the right in that opinion which they took from him: which, indeed, is no knowledge at all. Writers of this or former ages may be good witnesses of matters of fact which they deliver, which we may do well to take upon their authority; but their credit can go no farther than this; it cannot at all affect the truth and falsehood of opinions, which have another sort of trial by reason, and proof which they themselves made use of to make themselves knowing, and so must others, too, that will partake in their knowledge. Indeed, it is an advantage that they have been at the pains to find out the proofs, and lay them in that order that may show the truth and probability of their conclusions; and for this we owe them great acknowledgments, for

saving us the pains in searching out those proofs which they have collected for us, and which, possibly, after all our pains, we might not have found, nor been able to have set them in so good a light as that which they left them us in. Upon this account we are mightily beholden to judicious writers of all ages for those discoveries and discourses they have left behind them for our instruction, if we know how to make a right use of them; which is not to run them over in a hasty perusal, and perhaps lodge their opinions or some remarkable passages in our memories, but to enter into their reasonings, examine their proofs, and then judge of the truth or falsehood, probability or improbability, of what they advance; not by any opinion we have entertained of the author, but by the evidence he produces, and the conviction he affords us, drawn from things themselves. Knowing is seeing; and if it be so, it is madness to persuade ourselves that we do so by another man's eyes, let him use never so many words to tell us that what he asserts is very visible. Until we ourselves see it with our own eyes, and perceive it by our own understandings, we are as much in the dark, and as void of knowledge as before, let us believe any learned author as much as we will.

Euclid and Archimedes are allowed to be knowing, and to have demonstrated what they say: and yet whoever shall read over their writings without perceiving the connection of their proofs, and seeing what they show, though he may understand all their words, yet he is not the more knowing. He may believe, indeed, but does not know what they say, and so is not advanced one jot in mathematical knowledge by all his reading of those approved mathematicians.

Sect. XXV.—HASTE.

The eagerness and strong bent of the mind after knowledge, if not warily regulated, is often a hinderance to it. It still presses into farther discoveries and

new objects, and catches at the variety of knowledge, and therefore often stays not long enough on what is before it to look into it as it should, for haste to pursue what is yet out of sight. He that rides post through a country may be able, from the transient view, to tell how in general the parts lie, and may be able to give some loose description of here a mountain and there a plain, here a morass and there a river; woodland in one part, and savannas in another. Such superficial ideas and observations as these he may collect in galloping over it. But the more useful observations of the soil, plants, animals, and inhabitants, with their several sorts and properties, must necessarily escape him; and it is seldom men ever discover the rich mines without some digging. Nature commonly lodges her treasure and jewels in rocky ground. If the matter be knotty and the sense lies deep, the mind must stop and buckle to it, and stick upon it with labor, and thought, and close contemplation, and not leave it until it has mastered the difficulty and got possession of truth. But here care must be taken to avoid the other extreme: a man must not stick at every useless nicety, and expect mysteries of science in every trivial question or scruple that he may raise. He that will stand to pick up and examine every pebble that comes in his way, is as unlikely to return enriched and laden with jewels as the other that travelled full speed. Truths are not the better nor the worse for their obviousness or difficulty, but their value is to be measured by their usefulness and tendency. Insignificant observations should not take up any of our minutes, and those that enlarge our views and give light towards farther and useful discoveries should not be neglected, though they stop our course, and spend some of our time in a fixed attention.

There is another haste that does often and will mislead the mind if it be left to itself and its own conduct. The understanding is naturally forward, not only to learn its knowledge by variety (which makes it skip over one to get speedily to another part of knowl-

edge), but also eager to enlarge its views by running too fast into general observations and conclusions, without a due examination of particulars enough whereon to found those general axioms. This seems to enlarge their stock, but it is of fancies, not realities; such theories built upon narrow foundations stand but weakly, and if they fall not themselves, are at least very hardly to be supported against the assaults of opposition. And thus men, being too hasty to erect to themselves general notions and ill-grounded theories, find themselves deceived in their stock of knowledge when they come to examine their hastily assumed maxims themselves, or to have them attacked by others. General observations drawn from particulars are the jewels of knowledge, comprehending great store in a little room; but they are therefore to be made with the greater care and caution, lest, if we take counterfeit for true, our loss and shame be the greater when our stock comes to a severe scrutiny. One or two particulars may suggest hints of inquiry, and they do well who take those hints; but if they turn them into conclusions, and make them presently general rules, they are forward indeed, but it is only to impose on themselves by propositions assumed for truths without sufficient warrant. To make such observations is, as has been already remarked, to make the head a magazine of materials which can hardly be called knowledge, or at least it is but a collection of lumber not reduced to use or order; and he that makes everything an observation has the same useless plenty, and much more falsehood mixed with it. The extreme on both sides are to be avoided, and he will be able to give the best account of his studies who keeps his understanding in the right mean between them.

SECT. XXVI.—ANTICIPATION.

WHETHER it be a love of that which brings the first light and information to their minds, and want of vigor and industry to inquire, or else that men content

themselves with any appearance of knowledge, right or wrong, which, when they have once got, they will hold fast; this is visible, that many men give themselves up to the first anticipation of their minds, and are very tenacious of the opinions that first possess them; they are often as fond of their first conceptions as of their firstborn, and will by no means recede from the judgment they have once made, or any conjecture or conceit which they have once entertained. This is a fault in the conduct of the understanding, since this firmness, or, rather, stiffness of the mind, is not from an adherence to truth, but a submission to prejudice. It is an unreasonable homage paid to prepossession, whereby we show a reverence not to (what we pretend to seek) truth, but what by hap-hazard we chance to light on, be it what it will. This is visibly a preposterous use of our faculties, and is a downright prostituting of the mind to resign it thus, and put it under the power of the first comer. This can never be allowed, or ought to be followed, as a right way to knowledge, until the understanding (whose business it is to conform itself to what it finds on the object without) can by its own opiniatrety change that, and make the unalterable nature of things comply with its own hasty determinations, which will never be. Whatever we fancy, things keep their course; and their habitudes, correspondences, and relations keep the same to one another.

SECT. XXVII.—RESIGNATION.

CONTRARY to these, but a like dangerous excess on the other side, are those who always resign their judgment to the last man they heard or read. Truth never sinks into these men's minds, nor gives any tincture to them, but, chameleon-like, they take the color of what is laid before them, and as soon lose and resign it to the next that happens to come in their way. The order wherein opinions are proposed or

received by us is no rule of their rectitude, nor ought to be a cause of their preference. First or last in this case is the effect of chance, and not the measure of truth or falsehood. This every one must confess, and therefore should, in the pursuit of truth, keep his mind free from the influence of any such accidents. A man may as reasonably draw cuts for his tenets, regulate his persuasion by the cast of a die, as take it up for its novelty, or retain it because it had his first assent, and he was never of another mind. Well-weighed reasons are to determine the judgment; those the mind should be always ready to hearken and submit to, and by their testimony and suffrage entertain or reject any tenet indifferently, whether it be a perfect stranger or an old acquaintance.

Sect. XXVIII.—PRACTICE.

Though the faculties of the mind are improved by exercise, yet they must not be put to a stress beyond their strength. *Quid valeant humeri, quid ferri recusent*, must be made the measure of every one's understanding, who has a desire not only to perform well, but to keep up the vigor of his faculties, and not to balk his understanding by what is too hard for it. The mind, by being engaged in a task beyond its strength, like the body strained by lifting at a weight too heavy, has often its force broken, and thereby gets an unaptness or an aversion to any vigorous attempt ever after. A sinew cracked seldom recovers its former strength, or at least the tenderness of the sprain remains a good while after, and the memory of it longer, and leaves a lasting caution in the man not to put the part quickly again to any robust employment. So it fares in the mind; once jaded by an attempt above its power, it either is disabled for the future, or else checks it at any vigorous undertaking ever after; at least, is very hardly brought to exert its force again on any subject that requires thought and meditation. The understanding should be brought to the difficult

and knotty parts of knowledge, that try the strength of thought and a full bent of the mind, by insensible degrees; and in such a gradual proceeding nothing is too hard for it. Nor let it be objected that such a slow progress will never reach the extent of some sciences. It is not to be imagined how far constancy will carry a man; however, it is better walking slowly in a rugged way than to break a leg and be a cripple. He that begins with the calf may carry the ox; but he that will at first go to take up an ox, may so disable himself as not to be able to lift up a calf after that. When the mind, by insensible degrees, has brought itself to attention and close thinking, it will be able to cope with difficulties, and master them without any prejudice to itself, and then it may go on roundly. Every abstruse problem, every intricate question, will not baffle, discourage, or break it. But, though putting the mind unprepared upon an unusual stress that may discourage or damp it for the future ought to be avoided, yet this must not run it, by an over-great shyness of difficulties, into a lazy sauntering about ordinary and obvious things that demand no thought or application. This debases and enervates the understanding, makes it weak and unfit for labor. This is a sort of hovering about the surface of things without any insight into them or penetration; and when the mind has been once habituated to this lazy recumbency and satisfaction on the obvious surface of things, it is in danger to rest satisfied there and go no deeper, since it cannot do it without pains and digging. He that has for some time accustomed himself to take up with what easily offers itself at first view, has reason to fear he shall never reconcile himself to the fatigue of turning and tumbling things in his mind, to discover their more retired and more valuable secrets.

It is not strange that methods of learning which scholars have been accustomed to in their beginning and entrance upon the sciences should influence them all their lives, and be settled in their minds by an

overruling reverence, especially if they be such as universal use has established. Learners must at first be believers; and their master's rules having been once made axioms to them, it is no wonder they should keep that dignity, and by that authority they have once got mislead those who think it sufficient to excuse them if they go out of their way in a well-beaten track.

SECT. XXIX.—WORDS.

I HAVE copiously enough spoken of the abuse of words in another place, and therefore shall, upon this reflection, that the sciences are full of them, warn those that would conduct their understanding right not to take any term, howsoever authorized by the language of the schools, to stand for anything until they have an idea of it. A word may be of frequent use and great credit with several authors, and be by them made use of as if it stood for some real being; but yet, if he that reads cannot frame any distinct ideas of that being, it is certain to him a mere empty sound without a meaning, and he learns no more by all that is said of it, or attributed to it, than if it were affirmed only of that bare empty sound. They who would advance in knowledge, and not deceive and swell themselves with a little articulated air, should lay down this as a fundamental rule, not to take words for things, nor suppose that names in books signify real entities in nature, until they can frame clear and distinct ideas of those entities. It will not perhaps be allowed if I should not set down *substantial forms* and *intentional species* as such that may justly be suspected to be of this kind of insignificant terms. But this I am sure, to one that can form no determined idea of what they stand for, they signify nothing at all; and all that he thinks he knows about them is to him so much knowledge about nothing, and amounts at most but to learned ignorance. It is not without all reason supposed that there are many such empty terms

to be found in some learned writers, to which they had recourse to etch out their systems, where their understandings could not furnish them with conceptions from things. But yet I believe the supposing of some relatives in nature answering those and the like words have much perplexed some, and quite misled others, in the study of nature. That which in any discourse signifies *I know not what*, should be considered *I know not when*. Where men have any conceptions, they can, if they are never so abstruse or abstracted, explain them and the terms they use for them. For our conceptions being nothing but ideas, which are all made up of simple ones, if they cannot give us the ideas their words stand for, it is plain they have none. To what purpose can it be to hunt after his conceptions who has none, or none distinct? He that knew not what he himself meant by a learned term cannot make us know anything by his use of it, let us beat our heads about never so long. Whether we are able to comprehend all the operations of nature and the manners of them, it matters not to inquire: but this is certain, that we can comprehend no more of them than we can distinctly conceive; and therefore to obtrude terms where we have no distinct conceptions, as if they did contain, or, rather, conceal, something, is but an artifice of learned vanity to cover a defect in hypothesis or our understandings. Words are not made to conceal, but to declare and show something; where they are, by those who pretend to instruct, otherwise used, they conceal indeed something; but that which they conceal is nothing but the ignorance, error, or sophistry of the talker, for there is in truth nothing else under them.

Sect. XXX.—WANDERING.

That there is a constant succession and flux of ideas in our minds I have observed in the former part of this Essay, and every one may take notice of it in

himself. This, I suppose, may deserve some part of our care in the conduct of our understandings; and I think it may be of great advantage if we can by use get that power over our minds as to be able to direct the train of ideas, that so, since there will new ones perpetually come in our thoughts by a constant succession, we may be able by choice so to direct them that none may come in view but such as are pertinent to our present inquiry, and in such order as may be most useful to the discovery we are upon; or, at least, if some foreign and unsought ideas will offer themselves, that yet we might be able to reject them, and keep them from taking off our minds from its present pursuit, and hinder them from running away with our thoughts quite from the subject in hand. This is not, I suspect, so easy to be done as perhaps may be imagined; and yet, for aught I know, this may be, if not the chief, yet one of the great differences that carry some men in their reasoning so far beyond others, where they seem to be naturally of equal parts. A proper and effectual remedy for this wandering of thoughts I would be glad to find. He that shall propose such a one would do great service to the studious and contemplative part of mankind, and perhaps help unthinking men to become thinking. I must acknowledge, that hitherto I have discovered no other way to keep our thoughts close to their business, but the endeavoring, as much as we can, and, by frequent attention and application, getting the habit of attention and application. He that will observe children will find that even when they endeavor their utmost, they cannot keep their minds from straggling. The way to cure it, I am satisfied, is not angry chiding or beating, for that presently fills their heads with all the ideas that fear, dread, or confusion can offer to them. To bring back gently their wandering thoughts, by leading them into the path, and going before them in the train they should pursue, without any rebuke, or so much as taking notice (where it can be avoided) of their roving, I suppose would sooner reconcile and

inure them to attention than all those rougher methods, which more distract their thought, and, hindering the application they would promote, introduce a contrary habit.

SECT. XXXI.—DISTINCTIONS.

DISTINCTION and division are (if I mistake not the import of the words) very different things; the one being the perception of a difference that nature has placed in things, the other our making a division where there is yet none; at least, if I may be permitted to consider them in this sense, I think I may say of them that one of them is the most necessary and conducive to true knowledge that can be; the other, when too much made use of, serves only to puzzle and confound the understanding. To observe every the least difference that is in things argues a quick and clear sight, and this keeps the understanding steady and right in its way to knowledge. But though it be useful to discern every variety that is to be found in nature, yet it is not convenient to consider every difference that is in things, and divide them into distinct classes under every such difference. This will run us, if followed, into particulars (for every individual has something that differences it from another), and we shall be able to establish no general truths, or else, at least, shall be apt to perplex the mind about them. The collection of several things into several classes gives the mind more general and larger views; but we must take care to unite them only in that, and so far as they do agree, for so far they may be united under the consideration. For entity itself, that comprehends all things, as general as it is, may afford us clear and rational conceptions. If we would well weigh and keep in our minds what it is we are considering, that would best instruct us when we should or should not branch into farther distinctions, which are to be taken only from a due contemplation of things; to which there is nothing more opposite than the art of verbal distinctions, made at

pleasure, in learned and arbitrarily invented terms, to be applied at a venture, without comprehending or conveying any distinct notions, and so altogether fitted to artificial talk or empty noise in dispute, without any clearing of difficulties or advance in knowledge. Whatsoever subject we examine and would get knowledge in, we should, I think, make as general and as large as it will bear; nor can there be any danger of this if the idea of it be settled and determined; for if that be so, we shall easily distinguish it from any other idea, though comprehended under the same name. For it is to fence against the entanglements of equivocal words, and the great art of sophistry which lies in them, that distinctions have been multiplied, and their use thought so necessary. But, had every distinct abstract idea a distinct known name, there would be little need of these multiplied scholastic distinctions, though there would be nevertheless as much need still of the mind's observing the differences that are in things, and discriminating them thereon one from another. It is not, therefore, the right way to knowledge to hunt after and fill the head with abundance of artificial and scholastic distinctions, wherewith learned men's writings are often filled; and we sometimes find what they treat of so divided and subdivided, that the mind of the most attentive reader loses the sight of it, as it is more than probable the writer himself did; for in things crumbled into dust, it is in vain to effect or pretend order, or expect clearness. To avoid confusion by too few or too many divisions, is a great skill in thinking as well as writing, which is but the copying our thoughts; but what are the boundaries of the mean between the two vicious excesses on both hands, I think is hard to set down in words: clear and distinct ideas is all that I yet know able to regulate it. But as to verbal distinctions received and applied to common terms, *i.e.*, equivocal words, they are more properly, I think, the business of criticisms and dictionaries than of real knowledge and philosophy, since they, for the most part, explain the

meaning of words, and give us their several significations. The dexterous management of terms, and being able to *fend* and *prove* with them, I know has and does pass in the world for a great part of learning; but it is learning distinct from knowledge, for knowledge consists only in perceiving the habitudes and relation of ideas one to another, which is done without words; the intervention of a sound helps nothing to it. And hence we see that there is least use of distinctions where there is most knowledge: I mean in mathematics, where men have determined ideas with known names to them; and so, there being no room for equivocations, there is no need of distinctions. In arguing, the opponent uses as comprehensive and equivocal terms as he can, to involve his adversary in the doubtfulness of his expressions: this is expected, and therefore the answerer on his side makes it his play to distinguish as much as he can, and thinks he can never do it too much; nor can he, indeed, in that way wherein victory may be had without truth and without knowledge. This seems to me to be the art of disputing. Use your words as captiously as you can in your arguing on one side, and apply distinctions as much as you can on the other side, to every term, to nonplus your opponent; so that, in this sort of scholarship, there being no bounds set to distinguishing, some men have thought all acuteness to have lain in it; and therefore, in all they have read or thought on, their great business has been to amuse themselves with distinctions, and multiply to themselves divisions, at least more than the nature of the thing required. There seems to me, as I said, to be no other rule for this but a due and right consideration of things as they are in themselves. He that has settled in his mind determined ideas, with names affixed to them, will be able both to discern their differences one from another, which is really distinguished; and where the penury of words affords not terms answeringe very distinct idea, will be able to apply proper distinguishing terms to the comprehensive and equivocal names he

is forced to make use of. This is all the need I know of distinguishing terms; and in such verbal distinctions, each term of the distinction joined to that whose signification it distinguishes, is but a new distinct name for a distinct idea. Where they are so, and men have clear and distinct conceptions that answer their verbal distinctions, they are right, and are pertinent as far as they serve to clear anything in the subject under consideration. And this is that which seems to me the proper and only measure of distinctions and divisions; which he that will conduct his understanding right must not look for in the acuteness of invention, nor the authority of writers, but will find only in the consideration of things themselves, whether they are led into it by their own meditations or the information of books.

An aptness to jumble things together, wherein can be found any likeness, is a fault in the understanding on the other side, which will not fail to mislead it, and by thus lumping of things, hinder the mind from distinct and accurate conceptions of them.

SECT. XXXII.—SIMILES.

TO which let me here add another near of kin to this, at least in name, and that is, letting the mind, upon the suggestion of any new notion, run immediately after similes to make it the clearer to itself; which, though it may be a good way, and useful in the explaining our thoughts to others, yet it is by no means a right method to settle true notions of anything in ourselves, because similes always fail in some part, and come short of that exactness which our conceptions should have to things, if we would think aright. This indeed makes men plausible talkers, for those are always most acceptable in discourse who have the way to let in their thoughts into other men's minds with the greatest ease and facility: whether those thoughts are well formed and correspond with

things, matters not; few men care to be instructed but at an easy rate. They who in their discourse strike the fancy, and take the hearer's conceptions along with them as fast as their words flow, are the applauded talkers, and go for the only men of clear thoughts. Nothing contributes so much to this as similes, whereby men think they themselves understand better, because they are the better understood. But it is one thing to think right, and another thing to know the right way to lay our thoughts before others with advantage and clearness, be they right or wrong. Well-chosen similes, metaphors, and allegories, with method and order, do this the best of anything, because, being taken from objects already known and familiar to the understanding, they are conceived as fast as spoken; and the correspondence being concluded, the thing they are brought to explain and elucidate is thought to be understood too. Thus fancy passes for knowledge, and what is prettily said is mistaken for solid. I say not this to decry metaphor, or with design to take away that ornament of speech; my business here is not with rhetoricians and orators, but with philosophers and lovers of truth; to whom I would beg leave to give this one rule whereby to try whether, in the application of their thoughts to anything for the improvement of their knowledge, they do in truth comprehend the matter before them really such as it is in itself. The way to discover this is to observe whether, in the laying it before themselves or others, they make use only of borrowed representations and ideas foreign to the thing, which are applied to it by way of accommodation, as bearing some proportion of imagined likeness to the subject under consideration. Figured and metaphorical expressions do well to illustrate more abstruse and unfamiliar ideas, which the mind is not yet thoroughly accustomed to, but then they must be made use of to illustrate ideas that we already have, not to paint to us those which we yet have not. Such borrowed and allusive ideas may follow real and solid truth, to set it off when found, but

must by no means be set in its place, and taken for it. If all our search has yet reached no farther than simile and metaphor, we may assure ourselves we rather fancy than know, and are not yet penetrated into the inside and reality of the thing, be it what it will, but content ourselves with what our imaginations, not things themselves, furnish us with.

SECT. XXXIII.—ASSENT.

IN the whole conduct of the understanding there is nothing of more moment than to know when and where, and how far, to give assent, and possibly there is nothing harder. It is very easily said, and nobody questions it, that giving and withholding our assent, and the degrees of it, should be regulated by the evidence which things carry with them; and yet we see men are not the better for this rule: some firmly embrace doctrines upon slight grounds, some upon no grounds, and some contrary to appearance. Some admit of certainty, and are not to be moved in what they hold; others waver in everything; and there want not those that reject all as uncertain. What then shall a novice, an inquirer, a stranger do in this case? I answer, use his eyes. There is a correspondence in things, and agreement and disagreement in ideas, discernible in very different degrees, and there are eyes in men to see them, if they please, only their eyes may be dimmed or dazzled, and the discerning sight in them impaired or lost. Interest and passion dazzle; the custom of arguing on any side, even against our persuasions, dims the understanding, and makes it by degrees lose the faculty of discerning clearly between truth and falsehood, and so of adhering to the right side. It is not safe to play with error, and dress it up to ourselves or others in the shape of truth. The mind by degrees loses its natural relish of real solid truth, is reconciled insensibly to anything that can but be dressed up into any faint appearance

of it, and, if the fancy be allowed the place of judgment at first in sport, it afterward comes by use to usurp it; and what is recommended by this flatterer (that studies but to please) is received for good. There are so many ways of fallacy, such arts of giving colors, appearances, and resemblances by this court-dresser, the fancy, that he who is not wary to admit nothing but truth itself, very careful not to make his mind subservient to anything else, cannot but be caught. He that has a mind to believe has half assented already; and he that, by often arguing against his own sense, imposes falsehoods on others, is not far from believing himself. This takes away the great distance there is between truth and falsehood; it brings them almost together, and makes it no great odds, in things that approach so near, which you take; and when things are brought to that pass, passion or interest, etc., easily and without being perceived, determine which shall be right.

SECT. XXXIV.—INDIFFERENCY.

I HAVE said above that we should keep a perfect indifferency for all opinions, not wish any of them true, or try to make them appear so; but being indifferent, receive and embrace them according as evidence, and that alone, gives the attestation of truth. They that do thus, *i.e.*, keep their minds indifferent to opinions, to be determined only by evidence, will always find the understanding has perception enough to distinguish between evidence or no evidence, between plain and doubtful; and if they neither give nor refuse their assent but by that measure, they will be safe in the opinions they have. Which being perhaps but few, this caution will have also this good in it, that it will put them upon considering, and teach them the necessity of examining more than they do; without which the mind is but a receptacle of inconsistencies, not the storehouse of truths. They that do not keep up this

indifferency in themselves for all but truth, not supposed, but evidenced in themselves, put colored spectacles before their eyes, and look on things through false glasses, and then think themselves excused in following the false appearances which they themselves put upon them. I do not expect that by this way the assent should in every one be proportioned to the grounds and clearness wherewith every truth is capable to be made out, or that men should be perfectly kept from error; that is more than human nature can by any means be advanced to; I aim at no such unattainable privilege: I am only speaking of what they should do who would deal fairly with their own minds, and make a right use of their faculties in the pursuit of truth; we fail them a great deal more than they fail us. It is mismanagement more than want of abilities that men have reason to complain of, and which they actually do complain of in those that differ from them. He that, by an indifferency for all but truth, suffers not his assent to go faster than his evidence, nor beyond it, will learn to examine, and examine fairly, instead of presuming, and nobody will be at a loss or in danger for want of embracing those truths which are necessary in his station and circumstances. In any other way but this, all the world are born to orthodoxy; they imbibe at first the allowed opinions of their country and party, and so, never questioning their truth, not one of a hundred ever examines. They are applauded for presuming they are in the right. He that considers is a foe to orthodoxy, because possibly he may deviate from some of the received doctrines there. And thus men, without any industry or acquisition of their own, inherit local truths (for it is not the same everywhere), and are inured to assent without evidence. This influences farther than is thought; for what one of a hundred of the bigots in all parties ever examined the tenets he is so stiff in, or ever thought it his business or duty so to do? It is suspected of lukewarmness to suppose it necessary, and a tendency to apostacy to go about it. And if a

man can bring his mind once to be positive and fierce for positions whose evidence he has never once examined, and that in matters of greatest concernment to him, what shall keep him from this short and easy way of being in the right in cases of less moment? Thus we are taught to clothe our minds, as we do our bodies, after the fashion in vogue, and it is accounted fantasticalness, or something worse, not to do so. This custom (which who dares oppose?) makes the shortsighted bigots and the warier sceptics, as far as it prevails. And those that break from it are in danger of heresy; for, taking the whole world, how much of it doth truth and orthodoxy possess together? Though it is by the last alone (which has the good luck to be everywhere) that error and heresy are judged of; for argument and evidence signify nothing in the case, and excuse nowhere, but are sure to be borne down in all societies by the infallible orthodoxy of the place. Whether this be the way to truth and right assent, let the opinions that take place and prescribe in the several habitable parts of the earth declare. I never saw any reason yet why truth might not be trusted to its own evidence: I am sure, if that be not able to support it, there is no fence against error, and then truth and falsehood are but names that stand for the same things. Evidence, therefore, is that by which alone every man is (and should be) taught to regulate his assent, who is then, and then only, in the right way when he follows it.

Men deficient in knowledge are usually in one of these three states: either wholly ignorant, or as doubting some proposition they have either embraced formerly or at present are inclined to; or, lastly, they do with assurance hold and profess without ever having examined, and being convinced by well-grounded arguments.

The first of these are in the best state of the three, by having their minds yet in their perfect freedom and indifferency, the likelier to pursue truth the better, having no bias yet clapped on to mislead them.

SECT. XXXV.—INDIFFERENCY.

FOR ignorance with an indifferency for truth is nearer to it than opinion with ungrounded inclination, which is the great source of error; and they are more in danger to go out of the way who are marching under the conduct of a guide that it is a hundred to one will mislead them, than he that has not yet taken a step, and is likelier to be prevailed on to inquire after the right way. The last of the three sorts are in the worst condition of all; for if a man can be persuaded and fully assured of anything for a truth without having examined, what is there that he may not embrace for truth? and if he has given himself up to believe a lie, what means is there left to recover one who can be assured without examining? To the other two this I crave leave to say, that as he that is ignorant is in the best state of the two, so he should pursue truth in a method suitable to that state; *i.e.*, by inquiring directly into the nature of the thing itself, without minding the opinions of others, or troubling himself with their questions or disputes about it, but to see what he himself can, sincerely searching after truth, find out. He that proceeds upon others' principles in his inquiry into any science, though he be resolved to examine them and judge of them freely, does yet, at least, put himself on that side, and post himself in a party which he will not quit until he be beaten out; by which the mind is insensibly engaged to make what defence it can, and so is unawares biassed. I do not say but a man should embrace some opinion when he has examined, else he examines to no purpose; but the surest and safest way is to have no opinion at all until he has examined, and that without any the least regard to the opinions or systems of other men about it. For example, were it my business to understand physic, would not the safer and readier way be to consult nature herself, and inform myself in the history of diseases and their cures, than, espousing

the principles of the dogmatists, methodists, or chemists engage in all the disputes concerning either of those systems, and suppose it true, until I have tried what they can say to beat me out of it? Or, supposing that Hippocrates, or any other book, infallibly contains the whole art of physic, would not the direct way be to study, read, and consider that book, weigh and compare the parts of it, to find the truth, rather than espouse the doctrines of any party, who, though they acknowledge his authority, have already interpreted and wiredrawn all his text to their own sense; the tincture whereof when I have imbibed, I am more in danger to misunderstand his true meaning than if I had come to him with a mind unprepossessed by doctors and commentators of my sect, whose reasonings, interpretations, and language, which I have been used to, will of course make all chime that way, and make another, and perhaps the genuine meaning of the author, seem harsh, strained, and uncouth to me? For words having naturally none of their own, carry that signification to the hearer that he is used to put upon them, whatever be the sense of him that uses them. This, I think, is visibly so; and if it be, he that begins to have any doubt of any of his tenets, which he received without examination, ought, as much as he can, to put himself wholly into this state of ignorance in reference to that question, and, throwing wholly by former notions and the opinions of others, examine, with a perfect indifferency, the question in its source, without any inclination to either side, or any regard to his or others' unexamined opinions. This, I own, is no easy thing to do; but I am not inquiring the easy way to opinion, but the right way to truth, which they must follow who will deal fairly with their own understandings and their own souls.

SECT. XXXVI.—QUESTION.

THE indifferency that I here propose will also enable them to state the question right which they are in doubt about, without which they can never come to a fair and clear decision of it.

SECT. XXXVII.—PERSEVERANCE.

ANOTHER fruit from this indifferency, and the considering things in themselves, abstract from our own opinions, and other men's notions and discourses on them, will be that each man will pursue his thoughts in that method which will be most agreeable to the nature of the thing, and to his apprehension of what it suggests to him, in which he ought to proceed with regularity and constancy until he come to a well-grounded resolution wherein he may acquiesce. If it be objected that this will require every man to be a scholar, and quit all his other business, and betake himself wholly to study, I answer, I propose no more to any one than he has time for. Some men's state and condition require no great extent of knowledge; the necessary provision for life swallows the greatest part of it. But one man's want of leisure is no excuse for the oscitancy and ignorance of those who have time to spare; and every one has enough to get as much knowledge as is required and expected of him; and he that does not that is in love with ignorance, and is accountable for it.

SECT. XXXVIII.—PRESUMPTION.

THE variety of distempers in men's minds is as great as of those in their bodies; some are epidemic, few escape them, and every one too, if he would look into himself, would find some defect of his particular

genius. There is scarce any one without some idiosyncrasy that he suffers by. This man presumes upon his parts, that they will not fail him at time of need, and so thinks it superfluous labor to make any provision beforehand. His understanding is to him like *Fortunatus's* purse, which is always to furnish him without ever putting anything into it beforehand: and so he sits still, satisfied, without endeavoring to store his understanding with knowledge. It is the spontaneous produce of the country, and what need of labor in tillage? Such men may spread their native riches before the ignorant, but they were best not to come to stress and trial with the skilful. We are born ignorant of everything. The superficies of things that surround them make impressions on the negligent, but nobody penetrates into the inside without labor, attention, and industry. Stones and timber grow of themselves; but yet there is no uniform pile, with symmetry and convenience to lodge in, without toil and pains. God has made the intellectual world harmonious and beautiful without us, but it will never come into our heads at once; we must bring it home piecemeal, and there set it up by our own industry, or else we shall have nothing but darkness and a chaos within, whatever order and light there be in things without us.

SECT. XXXIX.—DESPONDENCY.

ON the other side, there are others that depress their own minds, despond at the first difficulty, and conclude that the getting an insight in any of the sciences, or making any progress in knowledge, farther than serves their ordinary business, is above their capacities. These sit still, because they think they have got wings to fly, and can soar on high when they please. To these latter one may for answer apply the proverb, *use legs and have legs.* Nobody knows what strength of parts he has until he has tried them. And of the understanding one may most truly say,

that its force is greater generally than it thinks until it is put to it. *Viresque acquirit eundo.*

And, therefore, the proper remedy here is but to set the mind to work, and apply the thoughts vigorously to the business; for it holds in the struggles of the mind as in those of war, *dum putant se vincere vicêre;* a persuasion that we shall overcome any difficulties that we may meet with in the sciences seldom fails to carry us through them. Nobody knows the strength of his mind, and the force of steady and regular application, until he has tried. This is certain, he that sets out upon weak legs will not only go farther, but grow stronger too, than one with a vigorous constitution and firm limbs who only sits still.

Something of kin to this men may observe in themselves, when the mind frights itself (as it often does) with anything reflected on in gross, and transiently viewed, confusedly, at a distance. Things thus offered to the mind carry the show of nothing but difficulty in them, and are thought to be wrapped up in impenetrable obscurity. But the truth is, these are nothing but spectres, that the understanding raises to itself to flatter its own laziness. It sees nothing distinctly in things remote and in a huddle, and therefore concludes too faintly that there is nothing more clear to be discovered in them. It is but to approach nearer, and that mist of our own raising that enveloped them will remove; and those that in the midst appeared hideous giants not to be grappled with, will be found to be of the ordinary and natural size and shape. Things that in a remote and confused view seem very obscure, must be approached by gentle and regular steps; and what is most visible, easy, and obvious in them, first considered. Reduce them into their distinct parts, and then in their due order bring all that should be known concerning every one of those parts into plain and simple questions; and then, what was thought obscure, perplexed, and too hard for our weak parts will lay itself open to the understanding in a fair

view, and let the mind into that which before it was awed with, and kept at a distance from, as wholly mysterious. I appeal to my reader's experience whether this has never happened to him, especially when busy on one thing, he has occasionally reflected on another. I ask him whether he has never thus been scared with a sudden opinion of mighty difficulties, which yet have vanished when he has seriously and methodically applied himself to the consideration of this seeming terrible subject; and there has been no other matter of astonishment left, but that he amused himself with so discouraging a prospect of his own raising, about a matter which in the handling was found to have nothing in it more strange or intricate than several other things which he had long since, and with ease, mastered. This experience should teach us how to deal with such bugbears another time, which should rather serve to excite our vigor than enervate our industry. The surest way for a learner, in this as in all other cases, is not to advance by jumps and large strides; let that which he sets himself to learn next be indeed the next, *i.e.*, as nearly conjoined with what he knows already as is possible; let it be distinct, but not remote from it; let it be new, and what he did not know before, that the understanding may advance; but let it be as little at once as it may be, that its advances may be clear and sure. All the ground that it gets this way it will hold. This distinct gradual growth in the knowledge is firm and sure; it carries its own light with it in every step of its progression in an easy and orderly train, than which there is nothing of more use to the understanding. And though this perhaps may seem a very slow and lingering way to knowledge, yet I dare confidently affirm, that whoever will try in himself, or any one he will teach, shall find the advances greater in this method than they would in the same space of time have been in any other he could have taken. The greatest part of true knowledge lies in a distinct perception of things in themselves distinct. And some

men give more clear light and knowledge by the bare distinct stating of a question, than others by talking of it in gross whole hours together. In this, they who so state a question do no more but separate and disentangle the parts of it one from another, and lay them, when so disentangled, in their due order. This often, without any more ado, resolves the doubt, and shows the mind where the truth lies. The agreement or disagreement of the idea in question, when they are once separated and distinctly considered, is in many cases presently perceived, and thereby clear and lasting knowledge gained; whereas things in gross taken up together, and so lying together in confusion, can produce in the mind but a confused idea, which in effect is no knowledge; or, at least, when it come to be examined and made use of, will prove little better than none. I therefore take the liberty to repeat here again what I have said elsewhere, that in learning anything, as little should be proposed to the mind at once as is possible; and that being understood and fully mastered, to proceed to the next adjoining part yet unknown, simple, unperplexed proposition belonging to the matter in hand, and tending to the clearing what is principally designed.

Sect. XL.—ANALOGY.

Analogy is of great use to the mind in many cases, especially in natural philosophy, and that part of it chiefly which consists in happy and successful experiments. But here we must take care that we keep ourselves within that wherein the analogy consists. For example, the acid oil of vitriol is found to be good in such a case, therefore the spirit of nitre or vinegar may be used in the like case. If the good effect of it be owing wholly to the acidity of it, the trial may be justified; but if there be something else besides the acidity in the oil of vitriol which produces the good we desire in the case, we mistake that for analogy

which is not, and suffer our understanding to be misguided by a wrong supposition of analogy where there is none.

SECT. XLI.—ASSOCIATION.

THOUGH I have, in the second book of my Essay concerning Human Understanding, treated of the association of ideas, yet having done it there historically, as giving a view of the understanding in this as well as in several other ways of operating, rather than designing there to inquire into the remedies that ought to be applied to it, it will, under this latter consideration, afford other matter of thought to those who have a mind to instruct themselves thoroughly in the right way of conducting their understandings; and that the rather, because this, if I mistake not, is as frequent a cause of mistake and error in us as perhaps anything else that can be named, and is a disease of the mind as hard to be cured as any; it being a very hard thing to convince any one that things are not so, and naturally so, as they constantly appear to him.

By this one easy and unheeded miscarriage of the understanding, sandy and loose foundations become infallible principles, and will not suffer themselves to be touched or questioned: such unnatural connections become by custom as natural to the mind as sun and light: fire and warmth go together, and so seem to carry with them as natural an evidence as self-evident truths themselves. And where, then, shall one, with hopes of success, begin the cure? Many men firmly embrace falsehood for truth, not because they never thought otherwise, but also because, thus blinded as they have been from the beginning, they never could think otherwise; at least, without a vigor of mind able to contest the empire of habit, and look into its own principles: a freedom which few men have the notion of in themselves, and fewer are allowed the practice of by others, it being the great art and business of the teachers and guides in most sects to sup-

press as much as they can this fundamental duty which every man owes himself, and is the first steady step towards light and truth in the whole train of his actions and opinions. This would give one reason to suspect that such teachers are conscious to themselves of the falsehood or the weakness of tenets they profess, since they will not suffer the grounds whereon they are built to be examined; when, as those who seek truth only, and desire to own and propagate nothing else, freely expose their principles to the test, and are pleased to have them examined, give men leave to reject them if they can; and if there be anything weak and unsound in them, they are willing to have it detected, that they themselves, as well as others, may not lay any stress upon any received proposition beyond what the evidence of its truth will warrant and allow.

There is, I know, a great fault among all sorts of people of principling their children and scholars; which at last, when looked into, amounts to no more but making them imbibe their teachers' notions and tenets by an implicit faith, and firmly to adhere to whether true or false. What colors may be given to this, or of what use it may be when practised upon the vulgar, destined to labor, and given up to the service of their bellies, I will not here inquire. But as to the ingenious part of mankind, whose condition allows them leisure, and letters, and inquiry after truth, I can see no other right way of principling them but to take heed as much as may be that in their tender years ideas that have no natural cohesion come not to be united in their heads, and that this rule be often inculcated to them to be their guide in the whole course of their lives and studies, viz., that they never suffer any ideas to be joined in their understandings in any other or stronger combination than what their own nature and correspondence give them; and that they often examine those that they find linked together in their minds, whether this association of ideas be from the visible agreement that is in the ideas themselves,

or from the habitual and prevailing custom of the mind joining them thus together in thinking.

This is for caution against this evil, before it be thoroughly riveted by custom in the understanding; but he that would cure it when habit has established it, must nicely observe the very quick and almost imperceptible motions of the mind in its habitual actions. What I have said in another place about the change of the ideas of sense into those of judgment may be proof of this. Let any one not skilled in painting be told, when he sees bottles, and tobacco-pipes, and other things so painted, as they are in some places shown, that he does not see protuberances, and you will not convince him but by the touch: he will not believe that by an instantaneous legerdemain of his own thoughts one idea is substituted for the other. How frequent instances may one meet with of this in the arguings of the learned, who not seldom, in two ideas that they have been accustomed to join in their minds, substitute one for the other; and, I am apt to think, often without perceiving it themselves. This, while they are under the deceit of it, makes them incapable of conviction, and they applaud themselves as zealous champions of truth when indeed they are contending for error. And the confusion of two different ideas, which a customary connection of them in their minds hath made to them almost one, fills their heads with false views, and their reasonings with false consequences.

SECT. XLII.—FALLACIES.

RIGHT understanding consists in the discovery and adherence to truth, and that in the perception of the visible or probable agreement or disagreement of ideas, as they are affirmed and denied one of another. From whence it is evident that the right use and conduct of the understanding, whose business is purely truth, and nothing else, is, that the mind should be kept in a perfect indifferency, not inclining to either

side any farther than evidence settles it by knowledge, or the overbalance of probability gives it the turn of assent and belief; but yet it is very hard to meet with any discourse wherein one may not perceive the author not only maintain (for that is reasonable and fit), but inclined and biassed to one side of the question, with marks of a desire that it should be true.

If it be asked me how authors who have such a bias, and lean to it, may be discovered, I answer, by observing how, in their writings or arguings, they are often led by their inclinations to change the ideas of the question, either by changing the terms, or by adding and joining others to them, whereby the ideas under consideration are so varied as to be more serviceable to their purpose, and to be thereby brought to an easier and nearer agreement, or more visible and remoter disagreement one with another. This is plain and direct sophistry; but I am far from thinking that, wherever it is found, it is made use of with design to deceive and mislead the readers.

It is visible that men's prejudices and inclinations by this way impose often upon themselves; and their affection for truth, under their prepossession in favor of one side, is the very thing that leads them from it. Inclination suggests and slides into their discourse favorable terms, which introduce favorable ideas, until at last, by this means, that is concluded clear and evident, thus dressed up, which, taken in its native state, by making use of none but the precise, determined ideas, would find no admittance at all. The putting those glosses on what they affirm; these, as they are thought, handsome, easy, and graceful explications of what they are discoursing on, is so much the character of what is called and esteemed writing well, that it is very hard to think that authors will ever be persuaded to leave what serves so well to propagate their opinions and procure themselves credit in the world, for a mere jejune and dry way of writing, by keeping to the same terms precisely annexed to the same ideas: a sour and blunt stiffness tolerable in

mathematicians only, who force their way, and make truth prevail by irresistible demonstration.

But yet, if authors cannot be prevailed with to quit the looser, though more insinuating ways of writing, if they will not think fit to keep close to truth and instruction by unvaried terms, and plain, unsophisticated arguments, yet it concerns readers not to be imposed on by fallacies and the prevailing ways of insinuation. To do this, the surest and most effectual remedy is to fix in the mind the clear and distinct ideas of the question stripped of words; and so, likewise, in the train of argumentation, to take up the author's ideas, neglecting his words, observing how they connect or separate those in the question. He that does this will be able to cast off all that is superfluous; he will see what is pertinent, what coherent, what is direct to, what slides by the question. This will readily show him all the foreign ideas of the discourse, and where they are brought in: and though they perhaps dazzled the writer, yet he will perceive that they give no light nor strength to his reasonings.

This, though it be the shortest and easiest way of reading books with profit, and keeping one's self from being misled by great names of plausible discourses, yet it being hard and tedious to those who have not accustomed themselves to it, it is not to be expected that every one (among those few who really pursue truth) should this way guard his understanding from being imposed on by the wilful, or, at least, undesigned sophistry which creeps into most of the books of argument. They that write against their conviction, or that next to them, are resolved to maintain the tenets of a party they are engaged in, cannot be supposed to reject any arms that may help to defend their cause, and therefore such should be read with the greatest caution. And they who write for opinions they are sincerely persuaded of and believe to be true, think they may so far allow themselves to indulge their laudable affection for truth as to permit their esteem of it to give it the best colors, and set it off with the

best expressions and dress they can, thereby to gain it the easiest entrance into the minds of their readers, and fix it deepest there.

One of those being the state of mind we may justly suppose most writers to be in, it is fit their readers, who apply to them for instruction, should not lay by that caution which becomes a sincere pursuit of truth, and should make them always watchful against whatever might conceal or misrepresent it. If they have not the skill of representing to themselves the author's sense by pure ideas separated from sounds, and thereby divested of the false lights and deceitful ornaments of speech, this yet they should do: they should keep the precise question steadily in their minds, carry it along with them through the whole discourse, and suffer not the least alteration in the terms, either by addition, subtraction, or substituting any other. This every one can do who has a mind to it; and he that has not a mind to it, it is plain, makes his understanding only the warehouse of other men's lumber; I mean, false and unconcluding reasonings, rather than a repository of truth for his own use, which will prove substantial, and stand instead when he has occasion for it. And whether such a one deals fairly by his own mind, and conducts his own understanding right, I leave to his own understanding to judge.

SECT. XLIII.—FUNDAMENTAL VERITIES.

THE mind of man being very narrow, and so slow in making acquaintance with things and taking in new truths, that no man is capable, in a much longer life than ours, to know all truths, it becomes our prudence, in our search after knowledge, to employ our thoughts about fundamental and material questions, carefully avoiding those that are trifling, and not suffering ourselves to be diverted from our main even purpose by those that are merely incidental. How much of many young men's time is thrown

away in purely logical inquiries I need not mention. This is no better than if a man who was to be a painter should spend all his time in examining the threads of the several cloths he is to paint upon, and counting the hairs of each pencil and brush he intends to use in the laying on of his colors. Nay, it is much worse than for a young painter to spend his apprenticeship in such useless niceties; for he, at the end of all his pains to no purpose, finds that it is not painting nor any help to it, and so is really to no purpose. Whereas men designed for scholars have often their heads so filled and warmed with disputes on logical questions, that they take those airy useless notions for real and substantial knowledge, and think their understandings so well furnished with science that they need not look any farther into the nature of things, or descend to the mechanical drudgery of experiment and inquiry. This is so obvious a mismanagement of the understanding, and that in the professed way to knowledge, that it could not be passed by; to which might be joined abundance of questions, and the way of handling them in the schools. What faults in particular of this kind every man is or may be guilty of, would be infinite to enumerate; it suffices to have shown that superficial and slight discoveries and observations, that contain nothing of moment in themselves, nor serve as clews to lead us into farther knowledge, should be lightly passed by, and never thought worth our searching after.

There are fundamental truths that lie at the bottom, the basis upon which a great many others rest, and in which they have their consistency. These are teeming truths, rich in store, with which they furnish the mind; and, like the lights of heaven, are not only beautiful and entertaining in themselves, but give light and evidence to other things that without them could not be seen or known. Such is that admirable discovery of Mr. Newton, that all bodies gravitate to one another, which may be counted as the basis of natural philosophy; which, of what use it is to the un-

derstanding of the great frame of our solar system, he has, to the astonishment of the learned world, shown; and how much farther it would guide us in other things, if rightly pursued, is not yet known. Our Saviour's great rule, that *we should love our neighbor as ourselves*, is such a fundamental truth for the regulating human society, that I think that by that alone one might, without difficulty, determine all the cases and doubts in social morality. These, and such as these, are the truths we should endeavor to find out and store our minds with; which leads me to another thing in the conduct of the understanding that is no less necessary, viz.:

SECT. XLIV.—BOTTOMING.

TO accustom ourselves in any question proposed to examine and find out upon what it bottoms. Most of the difficulties that come in our way, when well considered and traced, lead us to some proposition, which, known to be true, clears the doubt, and gives an easy solution of the question, while topical and superficial arguments, of which there is store to be found on both sides, filling the head with variety of thoughts, and the mouth with copious discourse, serve only to amuse the understanding, and entertain company without coming to the bottom of the question, the only place of rest and stability for an inquisitive mind, whose tendency is only to truth and knowledge.

For example, if it be demanded whether the Grand Seignior can lawfully take what he will from any of his people. This question cannot be resolved without coming to a certainty whether all men are naturally equal; for upon that it turns, and that truth, well settled in the understanding, and carried in the mind through the various debates concerning the various rights of men in society, will go a great way in putting an end to them, and showing on which side the truth is.

SECT. XLV.—TRANSFERRING OF THOUGHTS.

THERE is scarce anything more for the improvement of knowledge, for the ease of life and the despatch of business, than for a man to be able to dispose of his own thoughts; and there is scarce anything harder in the whole conduct of the understanding than to get a full mastery over it. The mind, in a waking man, has always some object that it applies to; which, when we are lazy or unconcerned, we can easily change, and at pleasure transfer our thoughts to another, and from thence to a third, which has no relation to either of the former. Hence men forwardly conclude, and frequently say, nothing is so free as thought, and it were well it were so; but the contrary will be found true in several instances; and there are many cases wherein there is nothing more restive and ungovernable than our thoughts: they will not be directed what objects to pursue, nor to be taken off from those they have once fixed on, but run away with a man in pursuit of those ideas they have in view, let him do what he can.

I will not here mention again what I have above taken notice of, how hard it is to get the mind, narrowed by a custom of thirty or forty years' standing to a scanty collection of obvious and common ideas, to enlarge itself to a more copious stock, and grow into an acquaintance with those that would afford more abundant matter of useful contemplation: it is not of this I am here speaking. The inconvenience I would here represent and find a remedy for is the difficulty there is sometimes to transfer our minds from one subject to another, in cases where the ideas are equally familiar to us.

Matters that are recommended to our thoughts by any of our passions, take possession of our minds with a kind of authority, and will not be kept out or dislodged; but, as if the passion that rules were for the time the sheriff of the place, and came with all

the posse, the understanding is seized and taken with the object it introduces, as if it had a legal right to be alone considered there. There is scarce anybody, I think, of so calm a temper, who hath not sometimes found this tyranny on his understanding, and suffered under the inconvenience of it. Who is there almost whose mind, at some time or other, love or anger, fear or grief, has not so fastened to some clog that it could not turn itself to any other object? I call it a clog, for it hangs upon the mind so as to hinder its vigor and activity in the pursuit of other contemplations, and advances itself little or not at all in the knowledge of the thing which it so closely hugs and constantly pores on. Men thus possessed are sometimes as if they were so in the worst sense, and lay under the power of an enchantment. They see not what passes before our eyes, hear not the audible discourse of the company; and when, by any strong application to them, they are roused a little, they are like men brought to themselves from some remote region; whereas, in truth, they come no farther than their secret cabinet within, where they have been wholly taken up with the puppet which is for that time appointed for their entertainment. The shame that such dumps cause to well-bred people, when it carries them away from the company, where they should bear a part in the conversation, is a sufficient argument that it is a fault in the conduct of our understanding not to have that power over it as to make use of it to those purposes and on those occasions wherein we have need of its assistance. The mind should be always free, and ready to turn itself to the variety of objects that occur, and allow them as much consideration as shall for that time be thought fit. To be engrossed so by one object as not to be prevailed on to leave it for another that we judge fitter for our contemplation, is to make it of no use to us. Did this state of mind remain always so, every one would, without scruple, give it the name of perfect madness; and while it does last, at whatever

intervals it returns, such a rotation of thoughts about the same subject no more carries us forward towards the attainment of knowledge, than getting upon a mill-horse, while he jogs on his circular track, would carry a man a journey.

I grant something must be allowed to legitimate passions and to natural inclinations. Every man, besides occasional affections, has beloved studies, and those the mind will more closely stick to; but yet it is best that it should be always at liberty, and under the free disposal of the man to act how and upon what he directs. This we should endeavor to obtain, unless we would be content with such a flaw in our understandings that sometimes we should be as it were without it; for it is very little better than so in cases where we cannot make use of it to those purposes we would, and which stand in present need of it.

But, before fit remedies can be thought on for this disease, we must know the several causes of it, and thereby regulate the cure, if we will hope to labor with success.

One we have already instanced in, whereof all men that reflect have so general a knowledge, and so often an experience in themselves, that nobody doubts of it. A prevailing passion so pins down our thoughts to the object and concerns of it, that a man passionately in love cannot bring himself to think of his ordinary affairs; nor a kind mother, drooping under the loss of a child, is not able to bear a part as she was wont in the discourse of the company or conversation of her friends.

But, though passion be the most obvious and general, yet it is not the only cause that binds up the understanding, and confines it for the time to one object, from which it will not be taken off.

Besides this, we may often find that the understanding, when it has awhile employed itself upon a subject which either chance or some slight accident offered to it, without the interest or recommendation of any passion, works itself into a warmth, and, by de-

grees, gets into a career, wherein, like a bowl down a hill, it increases its motion by going, and will not be stopped or diverted; though, when the heat is over, it sees all this earnest application was about a trifle not worth a thought, and all the pains employed about it lost labor.

There is a third sort, if I mistake not, yet lower than this: it is a sort of childishness, if I may so say, of the understanding, wherein, during the fit, it plays with and dandles some insignificant puppet to no end, nor with any design at all, and yet cannot easily be got off from it. Thus some trivial sentence or a scrap of poetry will sometimes get into men's heads, and make such a chiming there that there is no stilling of it; no peace to be obtained, nor attention to anything else, but this impertinent guest will take up the mind and possess the thoughts in spite of all endeavors to get rid of it. Whether every one hath experimented in themselves this troublesome intrusion of some frisking ideas which thus importune the understanding, and hinder it from being better employed, I know not. But persons of very good parts, and those more than one, I have heard speak and complain of it themselves. The reason I have to make this doubt is from what I have known in a case something of kin to this, though much odder, and that is a sort of visions that some people have lying quiet but perfectly awake in the dark, or with their eyes shut. It is a great variety of faces, most commonly very old ones, that appear to them in a train one after another; so that, having had just the sight of one, it immediately passes away to give place to another that the same instant succeeds, and has as quick an exit as its leader, and so they march on in a constant succession; nor can any one of them by any endeavor be stopped or retained beyond the instant of its appearance, but is thrust out by its follower, which will have its turn. Concerning this fantastical phenomenon I have talked with several people, whereof some have been perfectly acquainted with it, and others have been so wholly

strangers to it that they could hardly be brought to conceive or believe it. I know a lady of excellent parts who had got past thirty without having ever had the least notice of any such thing: she was so great a stranger to it, that when she heard me and another talking of it, could scarce forbear thinking we bantered her; but some time after, drinking a large dose of dilute tea (as she was ordered by a physician) going to bed, she told us, at next meeting, that she had now experimented what our discourse had much ado to persuade her of. She had seen a great variety of faces in a long train, succeeding one another, as we had described; they were all strangers and intruders, such as she had no acquaintance with before, nor sought after them, and as they came of themselves, they went too; none of them stayed a moment, nor could be detained by all the endeavors she could use, but went on their solemn procession, just appeared and then vanished. This odd phenomenon seems to have a mechanical cause, and to depend upon the matter and motion of blood or animal spirits.

When the fancy is bound by passion, I know no way to set the mind free and at liberty to prosecute what thoughts the man would make choice of, but to allay the present passion, or counterbalance it with another, which is an art to be got by study, and acquaintance with the passions.

Those who find themselves apt to be carried away with the spontaneous current of their own thoughts, not excited by any passion or interest, must be very wary and careful in all the instances of it to stop it, and never humor their minds in being thus triflingly busy. Men know the value of their corporeal liberty, and therefore suffer not willingly fetters and chains to be put upon them. To have the mind captivated is, for the time, certainly the greater evil of the two, and deserves our utmost care and endeavors to preserve the freedom of our better part. And in this case our pains will not be lost; striving and struggling will prevail, if we constantly, in all such occasions, make use

of it. We must never indulge these trivial attentions of thought; as soon as we find the mind makes itself a business of nothing, we should immediately disturb and check it, introduce new and more serious considerations, and not leave until we have beaten it off from the pursuit it was upon. This at first, if we have let the contrary practice grow to a habit, will perhaps be difficult; but constant endeavors will by degrees prevail, and at last make it easy. When a man is pretty well advanced, and can command his mind off at pleasure from incidental and undesigned pursuits, it may not be amiss for him to go on farther, and make attempts upon meditations of greater moment, that at the last he may have full power over his own mind, and be so fully master of his own thoughts, as to be able to transfer them from one subject to another with the same ease that he can lay by anything he has in his hand, and take something else that he has a mind to in the room of it. This liberty of mind is of great use both in business and study, and he that has got it will have no small advantage of ease and despatch in all that is the chosen and useful employment of his understanding.

The third and last way which I mentioned the mind to be sometimes taken up with, I mean the chiming of some particular words or sentence in the memory, and, as it were, making a noise in the head, and the like, seldom happens but when the mind is lazy, or very loosely and negligently employed. It were better, indeed, be without such impertinent and useless repetitions. Any obvious idea, when it is roving causelessly at a venture, being of more use and apter to suggest something worth consideration than the insignificant buzz of purely empty sounds. But since the rousing of the mind, and setting the understanding on work with some degree of vigor, does for the most part presently set it free from these idle companions, it may not be amiss, whenever we find ourselves troubled with them, to make use of so profitable a remedy that is always at hand.